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Special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance

Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction, recovery and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster

Report of the Secretary-General***

Summary

The present report has been prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 59/279, adopted by the States Members of the United Nations in January 2005 in the light of global concern over the impact of the earthquake and tsunami that struck the Indian Ocean region. The report identifies the lessons learned from the humanitarian response effort and highlights key issues that have come out of the ongoing recovery effort in the affected countries. In doing so, it examines successes and challenges specific to the earthquake-tsunami response and recovery effort, and addresses several themes universal to disaster response and recovery, such as national ownership and leadership, disaster response capacity, coordination in the relief and recovery phases, resource mobilization, civil society engagement and risk reduction. The report concludes with a set of observations and recommendations from the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council and to the General Assembly for further discussion.

* A/60/50.
** E/2005/100.
*** The report was delayed for technical reasons.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report has been prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, which requested the Secretary-General to report annually to the General Assembly and to the Economic and Social Council on the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance. The report is also submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 59/279 of 19 January 2005 entitled "Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster", which requested the Secretary-General to report on its implementation to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session, and to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session in 2005.

II. Defining the crisis

2. On 26 December 2004 a massive earthquake measuring 9.0 on the Richter scale struck the west coast of northern Sumatra and was followed by several severe aftershocks. The earthquake, the fourth strongest in the world since 1900 and the strongest in 40 years, led to a 10-metre displacement of the seabed. It triggered a large tsunami that surged with catastrophic force across the Indian Ocean, striking the west coast of northern Sumatra within minutes and then hitting the western coastline of Thailand, Myanmar and Sri Lanka, the east coast of India and the low-lying Maldives island archipelago before reaching the coast of Africa, causing some deaths and damage in Seychelles and Somalia. Twelve countries were affected in all.

3. Approximately 240,000 people were killed by the disaster; 50,000 are missing and feared dead, and more than one million persons were displaced. In many affected areas, three times as many women were killed as men; children represented more than a third of the victims overall, and in some communities more than half. Indonesia was the country most affected, as the coastline of its Aceh Province was damaged by the initial force of the earthquake and then immediately engulfed by the tsunami. In Indonesia, Somalia and Sri Lanka the disaster took place within the context of long-standing complex crises, which had significant implications for the organization and delivery of humanitarian assistance, including, in particular, to those who had already been displaced by conflict.

4. The earthquake and tsunami predominantly affected poor coastal communities, destroying not only critical infrastructure, administrative capacity and basic services, but also key sources of livelihoods. An initial assessment undertaken by the Government of Indonesia with the support of the World Bank and the United Nations estimates that Aceh Province in Indonesia suffered 4.5 billion United States dollars ($) in damage, representing 97 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP), 78 per cent of which is comprised of small trade, farming and fisheries. The United Nations estimates that Sri Lanka suffered estimated direct losses of one billion United States dollars (4.5 per cent of GDP), including approximately $450 million in damage to the so-called "social sectors", such as housing, and nearly $300 million in damage to the tourism industry. In Maldives, the estimate of total damage has reached $470 million, or 62 per cent of the country's GDP. Economic losses were even significant in the larger and relatively well-developed economies of India, where 500 fishing villages were damaged along the Andaman coast, and in Thailand, where about 120,000 people lost their jobs in the tourism sector.

5. Six months after the disaster, the immediate survival needs of those who were directly affected have been addressed. Almost all these populations have access to adequate water supplies, although in many camps sanitation facilities are below internationally recognized minimum standards for relief situations. The clearing of debris has been largely completed along the main roads. In Sri Lanka some 30,000 provisional shelters have been built; in Indonesia 11,000 earthquake-resistant homes are under construction. As most supply lines for food and medicine have been re-established, the situation is gradually stabilizing. However, considerable and continuous seismic activity in the region — including a significant aftershock in the vicinity of Nias Island in Indonesia in late March — has caused further death and damage, has slowed recovery efforts and continues to take a psychological toll on the population. It is clear that even as the recovery phase progresses, significant humanitarian needs — particularly among women, children, minorities, migrant workers and the internally displaced — will persist for many months.

A. The initial response

6. Affected Governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement and local communities played a crucial role in the response. Government agencies quickly took the lead in organizing and coordinating the relief efforts, local NGOs and Red Cross/Red Crescent volunteers provided immediate emergency assistance and host family networks offered shelter to the homeless. National actors also provided international actors with invaluable information for initial assessments and mapping. The role of the military in cleaning debris and clearing roads was vital.

7. For example, the Government of Indonesia deployed 600 troops and transportation assets to Nanggore Aceh Darussalam to accelerate relief efforts and to work closely with international partners in relief distribution and initial damage assessments. The Government of Sri Lanka immediately placed all of its military, administrative and logistical assets at the disposal of the relief community and rapidly instituted compensation schemes for people affected by the tsunami. The Government of Thailand promptly provided health and other services to victims, while leading a massive forensic operation to identify bodies of foreign victims of the tsunami. The Government of India responded by releasing $155.56 million and 20,900 trained search and rescue personnel for carrying out immediate relief in its own affected states and union territories, and by deploying medical teams, naval ships, aircraft and several tons of relief supplies to Indonesia, Maldives and Sri Lanka. In Somalia, while the remoteness of the affected communities had an effect on the speed of the response, local communities, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the Somali Red Crescent Society and NGOs were quick to address immediate needs by mobilizing in-country resources and distributing much-needed relief items. The role of the local authorities in Puntland and of community elders in the towns and villages was invaluable, as they assisted humanitarian agencies in identifying the neediest populations.

8. International assistance to tsunami-affected countries began as soon as government requests for assistance were received. Following the onset of the disaster, the Governments of Indonesia, Maldives and Sri Lanka declared a state of emergency. The Governments of Indonesia, Maldives, Seychelles and Sri Lanka

formally requested international assistance. In Somalia the regional authorities of Puntland declared an emergency, and the Transitional Federal Government appealed for assistance.

9. Following the above-mentioned requests, five United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination teams composed of 44 disaster-response experts from 18 countries and four international organizations were deployed to five of the tsunami-affected countries. Sixteen United Nations agencies, 18 IFRC response teams, more than 160 international NGOs and countless private companies and civil society groups deployed to affected areas to provide emergency food, water and medical services to the estimated five million people in need of assistance. Some 35 countries provided military assets for the relief effort and the United Nations deployed civil-military coordination officers to key locations in the region. The United Nations Joint Logistics Centre established coordination centres in Indonesia and Sri Lanka to optimize logistics capabilities and to assist in the coordination and use of military assets. In order to facilitate the collection and flow of information among humanitarian actors, the United Nations activated the Virtual On Site Operations Coordination Centre, an online information exchange service to support real-time coordination, and set up humanitarian information centres in Indonesia and Sri Lanka to facilitate information flow. An inter-agency emergency telecommunication network was established in Indonesia to provide the communications infrastructure for coordination and operational management. The joint United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)/Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Environment Unit carried out rapid environmental assessments in collaboration with United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination teams in Indonesia, Maldives and Sri Lanka to identify acute environmental issues. In India the relief operations were coordinated by the Government without any external assistance; however, the United Nations disaster management team was engaged in sharing information about damages and losses with other partners, including bilateral agencies, NGOs and the private sector. Within days, most communities had received assistance; however, it took up to six weeks to reach those areas where access was most difficult.

10. Immediately following the disaster, the Secretary-General appointed the Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Margareta Wahlstrom, as the Special Coordinator for humanitarian assistance to tsunami-affected communities to provide leadership and support to the United Nations country team, and particularly to facilitate the delivery of international assistance through high-level consultations with the concerned Governments.

11. The disaster also generated an unprecedented display of public and private solidarity, making greater resources available for the emergency over a shorter period of time than for any other crisis. The United Nations estimates that a total of $6.8 billion has been pledged to the tsunami effort, including $5.8 billion from government sources and $1 billion (35 per cent) from corporate and private donations. Media reports indicate that at least another $1 billion has been contributed by private donors but not reported to the United Nations.

12. Some of those funds have been channelled through United Nations appeals. On 6 January 2005 the United Nations launched a flash appeal requesting $977 million in humanitarian and recovery assistance for the first six months. At a ministerial meeting held in Geneva on 11 January 2005, 25 states pledged a total of

$777 million towards the appeal as well as towards additional reconstruction activities. Fifteen days after the disaster, 60 per cent of the funds solicited in the flash appeal were committed or paid out. Following a mid-term review of the appeal in April 2005, the requirements were revised to $1,086 million. The OCHA financial tracking service estimates that in June 2005 $880 million was contributed to the appeal and a further $162 million was committed. Significantly, however, much of the tsunami funding has been contributed through non-United Nations channels, including such international organizations as the IFRC, which has reported receiving $2.2 billion, and large non-governmental organizations.

13. Such solidarity has extended to the intergovernmental level as well. On 6 January 2005 the members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) convened a ministerial-level meeting in Jakarta and adopted the Declaration on Action to Strengthen Emergency Relief, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Prevention in the Aftermath of the Earthquake and Tsunami Disaster on 26 December 2004, which aimed to mobilize further the international emergency relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes. At a special session on the earthquake and tsunami held at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction on 20 January 2005, more than 160 Governments called for the development of a tsunami early warning system in the Indian Ocean, and meetings were held to plan the establishment of early warning capacities. On 19 January 2005, many of the concepts in the Jakarta declaration received formal and broad endorsement from Member States in General Assembly resolution 59/279 on strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster, which emphasized the need for the international community to maintain its focus and support to tsunami-affected countries beyond the emergency phase.

B. Early recovery

14. From the outset, the response effort included recovery activities. Within two weeks of the crisis, the United Nations dispatched recovery teams to the affected areas to begin assessing disaster damage and to support national authorities in recovery planning. In addition, the Special Coordinator for humanitarian assistance to tsunami-affected countries was accompanied by a representative from the United Nations Development Group on several visits to the region to focus immediate attention on early recovery needs and to ensure that relief programmes incorporated early recovery elements.

15. The Governments of several of the affected countries, in partnership with the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the United Nations, were also to give early attention to assessing recovery and reconstruction needs and are currently in the process of finalizing medium- and long-term plans. Three months after the disaster, the Government of Indonesia unveiled its master plan for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Aceh, Nias and North Sumatra and then established the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Agency (BRR) to oversee its implementation. The formation of a dedicated government agency with a strong mandate and dynamic staff has done much to align the international community around a common set of values and standards for recovery and reconstruction programming. In Sri Lanka, a 24-month transitional strategy launched by the United Nations system in support of the Government's new post-tsunami recovery will be

unveiled at the end of July. In India, the Planning Commission of the Government of India established the Inter-Ministerial Core Group to prepare and manage a 156-week, $2.19 billion tsunami rehabilitation programme for all affected areas. In Thailand, the Government established a committee on rehabilitation management and development of the tsunami-affected countries along the Andaman coast. In Maldives, the Government has developed a detailed national recovery and reconstruction plan whose objectives include macroeconomic recovery and livelihood revival, community empowerment, environmental protection and disaster preparedness, and effective public service delivery.

16. To facilitate support for and implementation of the national plans, the Secretary-General appointed former President of the United States Bill Clinton as the Special Envoy for the Indian Ocean tsunami recovery effort. In that role, former President Clinton is working to maintain the world's attention on the tsunami operations, support coordination efforts at the country and global levels, promote transparency and accountability, and champion the kind of recovery that seizes the moral, political and financial opportunities the crisis has offered to set affected communities on a better — and safer — development path. To that end, President Clinton convened a "global consortium" of affected Governments, United Nations agencies, international organizations, international financial institutions and NGOs to improve coordination among the main actors, particularly at the country level, to facilitate the implementation of individual countries' reconstruction plans and to instil common transparency and accountability measures. The Special Envoy also visited a number of the affected countries in late May to assess progress in launching the recovery process.

III. Response successes, challenges and lessons learned

17. The Indian Ocean tsunami disaster created one of the most complex coordination and logistical challenges the disaster response system of the United Nations has ever had to manage. The timing and scale of the event required quick and flexible coordination efforts in a variety of countries and contexts, and its global reach led to a proliferation of relief actions and actors and garnered assistance from public, private and government sources at the highest levels. While such global attention and support has been both welcome and constructive, the high-intensity environment it has created has raised expectations of performance and accountability. Recognition of that context is the key to defining the challenges arising from the initial response. The following sections highlight observations and lessons learned from the response effort in five key areas.

A. National ownership and leadership

18. The fact that the disaster affected strong national Governments with well-developed national institutions and functioning legal frameworks greatly contributed to the success of relief efforts. In many areas, the relief effort benefited from robust involvement from line ministries, armed forces and the use of existing government structures, where they were in place. The collaborative relationship between the international and national relief actors and among all levels of Government ensured

greater ease in relief distribution and simplified the handover of humanitarian and early recovery activities to the appropriate government bodies.

Lessons learned

19. **Pro-active government coordination and collaboration significantly facilitated relief efforts**. In Indonesia the immediate appointment and placement in Aceh of a senior minister to coordinate response activities ensured that international and national response activities were complementary. In Sri Lanka, all parties and authorities immediately recognized the need for local-level coordination mechanisms that included the United Nations, NGOs and local representation, to ensure relief delivery and coordination in northern and eastern parts of the country. The Government of Thailand, in close collaboration with foreign Governments, was instrumental in ensuring a rapid and efficient evacuation of foreign nationals, and in coordinating international relief. The adoption by several Governments of emergency immigration procedures (visas upon arrival) and emergency customs clearance procedures accelerated the processing of relief personnel and goods in the early days of the crisis. Following the first two months, however, such procedures became increasingly complicated, resulting in the delay of many relief items and of items necessary for operations support (such as computers, telecommunication equipment, vehicles and essential aid supplies) and included some government restrictions on the use of satellite systems. Such administrative bottlenecks slowed relief efforts and impeded the effective delivery of much-needed assistance.

20. Effective national and international collaboration in disaster response would benefit from renewed engagement on mutual obligations and commitments to abide by agreements, such as the Tampere Convention on the Provision of Telecommunication Resources for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations, and from building knowledge of the body of practice on those issues that has developed over time.

21. **Early engagement with Government at local levels ensured greater collaboration in the short and medium term**. The affected Governments did not try to centralize authority during the relief effort, but instead welcomed engagement and coordination at subnational levels to facilitate their response. For example, the open, receptive and collegial attitude of senior government officials in Aceh and in Jakarta provided the basis for a strong and cooperative relationship during the initial phase, whereby sectoral and civil-military coordination meetings took place at a local level with the full support of national authorities. In India, the Government deployed experienced administrative officers to the most affected district of Nagapatinam in the state of Tamil Nadu to coordinate relief operations locally and, in collaboration with NGOs, set up a coordination centre that operated out of the district administration office.

22. Local actors are essential to successful response coordination, yet local government structures do not always have sufficient resources to perform such coordination tasks. Productive collaboration with local institutions, therefore, requires pre-disaster preparedness planning to develop relationships with local institutions in disaster-prone areas and build their capacity where they are weak.

B. Response capacity

23. By most accounts, the United Nations disaster response system functioned well: established emergency response networks and tools were quickly deployed and assistance teams reached all affected areas within the first six weeks. No epidemics or major outbreaks of disease took place, close to two million people received emergency medical assistance and an equal number received food aid. School supplies were distributed to more than 700,000 children, and most children in affected areas quickly went back in school.

24. However, the response suffered from gaps in certain sectors — shelter, water and sanitation — owing in large part to the sheer magnitude of the problem but also to the inability of the system to quickly field and maintain a cadre of sufficiently skilled and experienced staff. The response also suffered from a high turnover of United Nations staff and the delayed deployment of some critical United Nations common humanitarian services, particularly information management, communications and civil-military capacity, complicating coordination in the early days.

Lessons learned

25. **Significant gaps in sectoral capacity continue to impede response efforts**. Recurrent gaps in the system's ability to provide adequate clean water, shelter and appropriate sanitation facilities continue to impede a rapid humanitarian response. There is therefore a need to reinvest in developing and maintaining systemic capacity for humanitarian response by increasing and strengthening professional staffing and administration in key sectors, and by forming and supporting strategic partnerships that tap into NGO capacity and draw on existing expertise of local and regional organizations. In that regard, the Emergency Relief Coordinator has launched a system-wide humanitarian response review to evaluate the strengths and limitations of the current system and make practical recommendations as to how weaknesses might be addressed. The results of the review are scheduled to be available in June.

26. **The immediate and strategic deployment of common services is essential to ensuring effective response**. The fielding of United Nations Joint Logistics Centre staff as members of United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination teams was instrumental in jump-starting critical logistics tasks. However, civil-military coordination officers of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and humanitarian information centres were not activated as part of rapid response mechanisms but were deployed through more formal channels and were therefore delayed. The mobilization of telecommunication systems was difficult, and data collection, analysis and dissemination suffered from a lack of standards and systems. Such challenges may be addressed by United Nations recognition of the strategic value of such services during the earliest phase of a crisis and by the development of the mechanisms and standards that allow early deployment of common humanitarian services

27. Rapid response capacity could also be strengthened by the formation of a standing global response capacity under the auspices of the United Nations, with immediate responsibility and authority to engineer the initial response. Such a system might also involve the development of regional capacities, particularly in

disaster-prone regions, so that relief teams and supplies can be employed more quickly and with a better understanding of local contexts. Initiatives such as the ongoing efforts by the Organization to expand the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination roster and the request by Indonesia to ASEAN (ASEAN) for a military assets rapid response mechanism for disasters in the region should be encouraged.

C. Coordination tactics and tools

28. Establishing effective response coordination mechanisms was one of the greatest challenges of the response effort. However, overall, coordination at the international, national and regional levels went well: standby arrangements with donors and the private sector to provide staff, equipment, transport and other assistance enhanced the timeliness of the response; the assistance of the military — national and international — was instrumental in early aid delivery; and the early deployment of senior United Nations staff to the Indian Ocean region also increased the effectiveness of coordination.

29. Coordination was not always smooth, however. Some areas were flooded with relief items and with actors who did not have the capacity to assist. In other areas the assistance provided did not match needs. Quickly establishing appropriate coordination structures with the variety of actors that arrived on the scene proved difficult in many cases. The resulting "humanitarian traffic jam" at times led to poor communication, ad hoc planning, and assistance delays, and the United Nations field-level leadership did not always have the support necessary to assist the Governments in carrying out strategic coordination functions.

Lessons learned

30. **Leadership and coordination should be adequately supported at the field level**. While the Emergency Relief Coordinator provided effective management and strategic thinking at the headquarters level, such critical functions were not as well supported in the field. In many cases, the resident/humanitarian coordinator lacked the staff resources to be able to perform the leadership and coordination functions required for such a large-scale response. The fact that the Special Coordinator for humanitarian assistance to tsunami-affected countries was able to act as a mobile support unit to the resident/humanitarian coordinators highlighted the need for such support at a field level. It is critical that the resident/humanitarian coordinator be immediately supported with staff and capacity for critical coordination functions and with the capacity to begin recovery activities from the outset as well as being explicitly highlighted as part of the initial funding appeal.

31. **Improved civil-military relations are required to ensure a better match of humanitarian needs and requests with military capability**. The quick and generous contribution of assets and personnel by the military of many countries, including the affected Governments, was key to accessing hard-to-reach populations and filled many of the technical gaps civilian capabilities could not provide. However, in some cases, the activities of civilian and military actors overlapped. As a result, relief goods were not always distributed in the right form and quantity and where they were most needed, and parallel relief pipelines ensued. The situation was further compounded by insufficient understanding of military command structures

and by inadequate information sharing between the humanitarian community and the military. Ensuring the most effective use of military and civil defence assets requires well-defined roles and responsibilities, clear channels of communication, and respect for and an appropriate level of sensitivity to humanitarian principles. Given the above, there is a need to improve the civil-military coordination operational framework.

D. Resource mobilization

32. The tsunami generated an extraordinary display of solidarity, making enormous resources available quickly and generating new sources of funding from the private and business community. While such a response allowed the humanitarian community to operate without focusing on fund-raising, the high-stakes financial environment such generosity created put pressure on humanitarian organizations to spend funds quickly and raised the bar for how such spending — and its impact — is reported to both donors and recipients. This has been further complicated, in some cases, by the fact that contributions have far exceeded the capacity of many organizations to spend them in the response phase. As a result, organizations have had to consider rapidly their own planning for the medium term and develop strategies quickly for reporting and communicating the use of those funds.

Lessons learned

33. **Improvements in the type and style of reporting and accountability are critical if the participation of new constituencies in future emergencies is to be maintained**. Although the humanitarian system's internal and external accountability mechanisms are well-established, the unprecedented volume of funds pledged or contributed for the tsunami, particularly from the private sector, has increased scrutiny over how such funds are spent. This led to an agreement between the United Nations and PricewaterhouseCoopers for the pro bono use of 8,000 hours of professional services to assist the United Nations with its immediate accounting and tracking of contributions raised under the tsunami flash appeal and with the expansion of its existing financial tracking systems for emergency appeals to fit the requirements of the new funding environment. Such improvements are critical to increasing confidence and support from both Governments and the private sector, now and in future crises. However, the value of such a system depends on the cooperation of all entities concerned, both within and outside the United Nations system, particularly in the provision of information about their allocation and expenditures in a timely manner.

34. Moreover, the spontaneous giving witnessed in the aftermath of the tsunami has put many humanitarian agencies and organizations in the unusual position of holding an exceptionally generous reserve of relief funding. In some cases, agencies are considering how to support the activities of other organizations in same sectors. Other organizations have stopped receiving tsunami funds, requesting potential donors to direct their contributions to other crises. Still others have been able to incorporate the tsunami funding into long-term reconstruction plans. In order to maintain public trust, humanitarian organizations, irrespective of how they choose to handle such funds, should communicate their intentions in a transparent way.

35. **Large amounts of resources require strengthened local-level coordination**. Driven by huge amounts of resources and the pressure from donors to act, many organizations responded to the crisis by initiating simultaneous, multiple relief projects and executed them with large numbers of staff, complicating coordination in many areas. In the rush for rapid action, many international actors were also perceived as neglecting their national and local counterparts and failing to take the local context into account. Coordination is crucial in such cases, and must involve donors, NGOs and national counterparts.

E. Displacement and protection challenges

36. In the aftermath of the tsunami, an estimated one million people were displaced in a relatively short period of time. After the first few weeks, however, the large numbers of temporarily displaced persons began to diminish as the situation stabilized and people started returning to their home areas. The fluidity with which displaced populations moved (particularly in Aceh), the increasing strain on host families and the destruction of livelihoods challenged the national authorities' and the international community's ability to develop a response tailored to the needs of different categories of populations and raised concerns about the potential for sexual and gender-based violence, including the possibility for kidnapping or the recruitment of children into fighting forces. Initiatives to temporarily relocate populations were further complicated by the political situation in Indonesia and Sri Lanka, and by previous relocation initiatives in the Maldives.

Lessons learned

37. **Addressing the particular needs of the internally displaced in the initial response phase is critical.** The immediate relief phase of any sudden-onset disaster should focus on responding to the urgent, life-saving needs of as many people as possible. That includes addressing the specific protection and assistance needs of internally displaced persons and involving them in relief planning from the outset so as to ensure the equitable distribution of aid and so as not to reinforce pre-existing inequalities. Special measures for the assistance and protection of internally displaced persons and host families should therefore be ensured and should be included in the programming and implementation of projects.

38. **An early focus on specifically vulnerable categories of the disaster-affected population is required**. Internally displaced persons have special needs, not only for assistance but also for protection. In the wake of the tsunami, specific fears were raised about protection of women and children and the risk of sexual violence and trafficking. There were early fears that sexual, gender-based and domestic violence, significant problems in some of the affected countries before the tsunami, might escalate as the loss of family members, livelihoods and mental strain would put additional stress on affected individuals. While there were reports of abuse, they remained limited in number, and considerable attention was paid to ways to avoid the risk as well as protect especially vulnerable persons. Early advocacy and vigilance in child protection by Governments helped prevent trafficking and exploitation of children, a fear that generated a great deal of attention in the early stages of the emergency. Advocacy with respect to good adoption measures was also important. As the response effort moves into a recovery phase, addressing the

difficult issues of land rights, documentation and compensation will become increasingly important.

39. **The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement should be extended to natural disasters**. During the past few years, much work has been put into creating a generally accepted international standard for the protection and assistance of the displaced, based on the experience of massive displacement in war and conflict situations. While it is acknowledged that the Guiding Principles do not reflect the particular situation arising from short-term and massive displacement by natural disasters, their general guidelines deserve to be used as a standard. However, while the Guiding Principles can be helpful in asking the right questions, they are not likely to provide the same answers everywhere. Adequately assisting internally displaced persons requires knowledge and understanding of the specific context in which the disaster occurred.

IV. Post-disaster recovery: successes, current and future challenges

40. Managing the transition from relief to recovery in the tsunami disaster is a critical concern for the future, as it includes (a) identifying lingering gaps and vulnerabilities; (b) aligning resource requirements and uses; (c) ensuring overall operational coherence across actors, activities and phases; (d) building linkages across humanitarian and development initiatives; and (e) undertaking risk reduction as a conscious part of recovery. Failure to build and sustain the momentum and support for all of the preceding activities will squander an important opportunity to rebuild critical infrastructure while simultaneously improving the lives and livelihoods of those affected and building national and local capacity to prepare for future disasters.

41. The pace of transition to recovery has and will continue to vary from country to country, requiring different approaches to the recovery effort. Recent reports from the field suggest that the impact of early recovery efforts is indeed uneven. The Government of Sri Lanka, for example, is reporting that about 17,300 families made homeless by the tsunami still live in 100 camps. Of those, 9,480 families live in tents, particularly in those coastal areas where available land away from the coastline is scarce. However, construction of transitional shelters is gaining momentum (31,000 in June), so it is hoped that those numbers will be significantly reduced in the short term. In Aceh, the continuing movement of internally displaced persons between various shelter options reflects attempts by the population to best align themselves for the start of the recovery phase and to have access to reconstruction assets and materials as quickly as possible. Work now being initiated by the Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Agency aims to ensure that affected populations understand how the reconstruction process will succeed and what role they can play in it.

42. As the recovery effort moves forward in all of the affected countries, it will become critical to sustain support to the affected Governments and communities for such recovery activities and to align recovery programming as well as Government and community priorities with an awareness of the existing socio-economic situation. The following sections examine the broad issues and challenges that have surfaced in the early stages of the recovery phase.

A. Early government ownership

43. Early national ownership of and participation in the design and implementation of recovery programmes is essential, not only for the achievement of the desired impact of recovery efforts but also to strengthen capacities on the ground. Participation by local disaster management experts and technicians will help ensure that recovery programming considers the needs and capacities of the affected population, and involvement of national decision makers is critical to building consensus around recovery priorities, roles, responsibilities and resources.

44. To ensure that such ownership takes hold, external support must build up local actors and institutions through the transfer of technology and know-how and through public education. Support provided to the Government of Indonesia by international actors has included planning, mapping, shelter and employment development at the national, provincial and district levels. In Sri Lanka international teams have supported needs assessments and data collection. In India, post-tsunami humanitarian and recovery operations were boosted by close collaboration among government authorities, local communities and Indian United Nations volunteers. Indian United Nations volunteers were also assigned to assist the recovery programming and implementation in Maldives and Sri Lanka, and reportedly have been instrumental in accelerating early recovery efforts. In Thailand, national task forces were established to work with their international counterparts and follow-up on critical issues in the recovery phase. However, greater support and field-level coordination between national and international partners for the rehabilitation and reconstruction phase, including longer-term strategic planning, is needed.

B. A focus on recovery during the relief phase

45. The early attention to recovery in the relief phase of the emergency helped local populations get back on their feet. For example, in Indonesia, rubble removal operations undertaken under the concept of "cash for work" injected cash into the local economy, while also providing a psychological boost to the participating population of some 11,000 people.

46. However, in many areas, early recovery was not possible as damage to roads posed a problem for the early transportation and delivery of reconstruction materials. Enhanced arrangements with private contractors and standby partners with advanced logistical capabilities and air services would assist in overcoming such recovery difficulties in the early stages. There is also currently a vacuum within the United Nations system for accepted, system-wide mechanisms for post-disaster recovery, particularly those with a risk reduction focus. Gaps in areas, such as suitable assessment methodologies for identifying early recovery needs and predictable mechanisms for the deployment of technical experts to support recovery planning and programming and for funding key recovery and vulnerability reduction interventions in a timely fashion, have been identified as major shortcomings in the effort to close the gap between relief and development.

C. Coordination

47. There have been several key achievements in sectoral coordination among international and national actors in the early recovery phase. Sectoral coordination in the reconstruction phase, led by the Governments of Indonesia and Sri Lanka with the assistance of the World Bank, ADB, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations, resulted in the development of national reconstruction plans, which have mapped out all reconstruction actors and activities into a coherent strategy. In Indonesia and Sri Lanka, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has assisted relevant line ministries and development banks in the preparation of their reconstruction plans in the agriculture and fisheries sector. In Sri Lanka, UNHCR (UNHCR), the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the International Organization for Migration worked together to link the transitional shelter strategy with permanent housing schemes. UNHCR and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) also conducted joint missions to assess the sexual and gender-based violence problems in the temporary government camps and devised a joint response plan. In Myanmar, coordination of sectoral activities proved efficient, thanks to an innovative joint coordination mechanism spearheaded by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the United Nations. In India, UNICEF has worked to bring together international and national NGOs to discuss water and sanitation issues at the national level as well as in Tamil Nadu. The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Meteorological Organization and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction have worked closely together with national agencies to build the institutional and technical foundations for a tsunami early warning system for the Indian Ocean region.

48. Despite such achievements, overall coordination of disaster recovery requires additional study and work. While disaster **response** is guided by clear and universally accepted coordination standards and tools, disaster **recovery** — which involves a wider range of actors — does not benefit from any formal overarching coordination structures. This is particularly true for international coordination at the country level and is compounded by the fact that resident coordinators do not have adequate support to fulfil their coordinating role. Recognizing the gap, the United Nations is currently using the occasion of the tsunami to identify what support is needed to improve coordination in disaster recovery.

D. Civil society engagement

49. The contributions of civil society during both the humanitarian assistance and the recovery phases have been unprecedented in many of the affected countries. Civil society groups in Thailand were essential to organizing recovery operations in cooperation with local governments and national authorities and to drawing attention to those who might otherwise have been overlooked, such as migrant workers from Myanmar and Moken sea nomads. In Indonesia, the Aceh Recovery Forum provided support and advice to the Government, the United Nations and the international financing institutions in the development of the Government's master plan for rehabilitation and reconstruction. Wide-ranging consultations with civil society in Aceh further enhanced the credibility of the planning process.

50. However, while it is widely understood that recovery programming must be based on the sound and participatory assessments of needs and capacities of the affected population, this has not always happened in practice. In several countries, concerns were raised by the affected populations about their lack of involvement in recovery planning. With the support of United Nations agencies and civil society organizations, decentralized capacities that promote participatory approaches to recovery are now being strengthened. Through that approach, it is hoped that sensitive issues, such as those regarding land rights, as well as the special vulnerabilities of minorities and migrant populations can be addressed.

E. Flexible and innovative fund-raising

51. Past experience suggests that funds that are readily forthcoming when a disaster dominates the news dry up later as attention wanes. That was the case following the earthquake in Bam, Iran in December 2003 and after Hurricane Mitch in October 1998, when only a small percentage of the hundreds of millions of dollars needed was ever pledged or paid out.

52. Recognizing that the window of opportunity for disaster fund-raising is narrow and short lived, the scope of the tsunami flash appeal was extended into the recovery phase, making it possible to raise resources for shelter, livelihood development, micro-infrastructure and the environment, and allowing the implementation of recovery plans and programmes without delay. Though the cash-rich environment the tsunami created made such flexibility possible, extending flash appeals to cover recovery needs should be considered a best practice for future disasters.

53. In addition, the fact that in many cases tsunami contributions are being applied to medium-term projects should help accelerate the recovery effort. With an estimated $6.8 billion pledged to the tsunami emergency, representing roughly half of the total reconstruction needs of all affected countries, the focus is therefore not on raising more money for recovery but on the implementation of the recovery plans. The recovery effort will also benefit from the efforts of the Global Consortium, convened by former President Clinton, which has been given the task of following up on recovery plans, keeping the momentum of reconstruction high and working with Governments to deal with the difficult policy and operational issues that typically stall recovery. The development of a common financial tracking database that aims to capture all forms of assistance, including official aid, NGO support and private sector contributions in one coherent system, will also facilitate recovery planning and implementation.

F. Early incorporation of risk reduction measures

54. In the recovery effort, all of the affected countries have been struggling to balance the need for rapid recovery with the importance of protecting their citizens from future disasters. Too often, societies affected by a major disaster tend to seek rapid and visible initiatives to restore normalcy, frequently at the cost of more sustainable and durable solutions. Failure to factor risk reduction into development policies, strategies and plans can result in large-scale disaster loss, increasing and costly demands on national and international humanitarian assistance and the

systematic erosion of economic growth and social welfare. The World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held from 18 to 22 January 2005, just a few weeks after the tsunami, provided timely guidance in that respect, through the launch of the long-negotiated intergovernmental agenda of priorities for action on disaster risk reduction, the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, on building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters.

55. Although it is generally accepted that it would have been impossible to prepare adequately for an event of such magnitude, it is nevertheless clear that effective early warning systems, including preparedness measures, could have saved thousands of lives. For example, the Government of India, following the 2001 earthquake in Gujarat, has been strengthening its capacity for disaster risk management at all levels for the last several years. As a result, when the tsunami struck Tamil Nadu, the villagers in one coastal district — who had received training in rescue operations and first aid under the disaster risk management programme — were able to save more than 100 lives. In this way, the tsunami has been instrumental in highlighting the need to empower communities at risk to protect themselves and their property from the impact of disasters. Developing community-based disaster preparedness plans — from stockpiling food and medicine, to building embankments in flood-prone areas and to including preparedness as part of teacher training and school curricula — would minimize the risk substantially. Further emphasis is also needed on building capacities for "end-to-end" early warning systems that include physical measures (earthquake-resistant structures, shelters, escape routes), preparedness plans and communications strategies that allow for quick and concrete action once warnings are issued.

V. Implications for future action and recommendations of the Secretary-General

Improve structures for national and international field response to major sudden-onset emergencies

56. Emergency response in sudden-onset disasters requires a commitment to further develop and coordinate rapid-response capacities and those common services that are instrumental in the immediate response phase. This includes reinforcing deployable capacity that does — or did — exist in disaster-prone countries. In addition, international response efforts would greatly benefit from strengthened field-level management for large-scale emergencies.

57. The United Nations, Governments and relevant civil society groups should commit to building and re-establishing regional, national and local disaster response capacities so that the humanitarian system has immediate access to deployable resources, particularly in disaster-prone areas.

58. The United Nations should expand and sustain its essential common humanitarian services so that they can be deployed predictably and with the right combination of skills.

59. The United Nations should develop a more unified field-level management structure to ensure response efforts are well coordinated and therefore effective. This includes strengthening support to resident/humanitarian coordinators.

Develop regional response capacity

60. Regional organizations are best equipped to respond with speed to a major disaster, benefiting from local knowledge and prior relationships with national decision makers. The United Nations should cooperate with regional organizations in disaster-prone regions so as to ensure that regional response plans and capacities are established and in place before a disaster strikes.

61. The international community should develop improved mechanisms for the deployment of regional standby capacities under the leadership of the United Nations, for example through pre-disaster agreements with regional organizations and the development of standard operating procedures for their deployment and coordination processes.

62. Governments should make their existing disaster response capacity available to such structures.

Build coherence within the civil-military response

63. The response to the tsunami by the military of different countries was unprecedented and critical to the initial life-saving and stabilization phase of the response. The tsunami was a watershed event in that respect. It is therefore likely that in future disaster-driven emergencies, military assets will be made available by States very quickly and in significant quantities. It is therefore necessary to ensure that the enormous capacity of the military contributes to the response in disasters, including establishing and better communicating accepted coordination procedures and structures between militaries and between military and humanitarian partners.

64. The United Nations should strengthen the procedures for the use and coordination of military assets in disaster response and develop more systematic links with major providers.

65. Recognizing that national military, civil defence and fire and rescue services are often the first responders, the disaster response community should actively engage those groups in determining when and how they can cooperate in disaster response.

Invest in early warning and preparedness

66. It is now widely recognized that the adoption of a regional tsunami early warning system could have saved thousands of lives. A regional system, however, will work only if it forms part of an "end-to-end" solution reaching the communities at risk and if it is supported by appropriate legal and institutional frameworks and local warning and emergency response systems. The United Nations should seek to foster regional frameworks and mechanisms for early warning systems as well as support technical and policy efforts for integrated risk management, in line with the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015.

67. The international community should invest in systematic, people-centred early warning systems for all hazards and all countries and to reach all those at risk. They should include risk assessments, awareness raising and preparedness measures so that communities are ready and able to act upon warnings.

Enhance the coordination and capacity of the United Nations system for recovery

68. Strengthening the ability of the United Nations to support the affected Governments while coordinating its own humanitarian and recovery activities is essential to an effective recovery. Though coordination of emergency response is led by the Emergency Relief Coordinator and undertaken at the field level by humanitarian coordinators, there is no institutional equivalent or support at either headquarters or in the field for the recovery phase. Addressing such gaps includes identifying an institutional mechanism to provide leadership and coordination at headquarters and Government levels, creating greater synergies between the resident and humanitarian coordinator role in the reconstruction phase and strengthening the United Nations country team.

69. Recognizing the institutional, coordination and strategic planning gap that exists in disaster recovery, the United Nations system should support ongoing initiatives to identify the support that is needed to improve coordination of disaster recovery efforts.

Promote financial transparency and accountability

70. The increasing magnitude of disasters — and, consequently, of the scope of the response and recovery effort, — means that the United Nations will play a larger role in ensuring financial transparency and accountability in the use of funds. Strengthening and maintaining a transparent financial tracking system for both government and private contributions inside and outside global appeals will be essential. The system will also better incorporate private actions into coordination structures and financial tracking and engage key private sector actors in resource mobilization and coordination efforts. Initiatives, such as the financial tracking system developed with the assistance of PricewaterhouseCoopers should be encouraged. International organizations and Governments should also work together to strengthen the reporting and accountability mechanisms in the recovery and reconstruction phases.

71. The international community should encourage the development of a common mechanism within the United Nations system for the tracking and reporting of humanitarian funds and should urge organizations both within and outside the United Nations system to contribute to such mechanisms in a timely way.

72. International organizations and Governments should work together to strengthen the reporting and accountability mechanisms in recovery and reconstruction phases.

Commit to reducing vulnerability and risk

73. In spite of the compelling evidence linking risk reduction and sustainable development, commitment to and investment in vulnerability and risk reduction continues to be a challenge. Long-term support for sustainable economic development, resulting in strong civil societies as well as sound infrastructure, will help ensure that nations are prepared to weather the shocks from natural hazards.

74. The international community should commit to and invest in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015.

Promote research and learning to guide recovery activities

75. Response and recovery programming must be based upon a sound, participatory assessment of the needs and capacities of the affected population, so that local initiatives, resources and capacities are fully understood and utilized. National policy development and consultation mechanisms and priority setting activities contribute to building consensus on recovery priorities, roles, responsibilities and resources.

76. The disaster response community should capture, consolidate and disseminate a body of knowledge on the lessons learned from the tsunami and other recent disasters that promotes institutional learning at all levels and guides future disaster management.

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Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance

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Special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance

Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Report of the Secretary-General***

Summary

The present report addresses the theme of "strengthening of the coordination of United Nations humanitarian assistance, including capacity and organizational aspects". It examines some of the key humanitarian developments and challenges, particularly capacity gaps experienced in both complex emergencies and disasters during the past year. The report also analyses the implementation and impact of Economic and Social Council resolutions 2002/32, 2003/5 and 2004/50 with a view to strengthening the policy guidance such resolutions provide to the international community on humanitarian issues and activities. Finally, the report briefly discusses the roles of and complementarity among relevant United Nations entities in the area of multidimensional missions and follows up this and other issues with a set of observations and recommendations from the Secretary-General to both the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly for further strengthening the coordination of humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.

* A/60/50 and Corr.1.
** E/2005/100.
*** The report was delayed for technical reasons.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report has been prepared in compliance with General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report annually to the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance. Moreover, it is submitted in compliance with the requests contained in General Assembly resolution 59/141 of 15 December 2004 and Economic and Social Council resolution 2004/50 of 23 July 2004 on strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.

II. Humanitarian developments

2. The level and scale of violence witnessed during the past few years in Afghanistan, Iraq, Darfur (the Sudan) and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is evidence that threats to human security are prevalent and continue to take an unprecedented toll on human life. That an earthquake in the Indian Ocean could trigger simultaneous emergencies in 12 separate countries and cause the largest single loss of life in places as far away as Sweden confirms that the impact of humanitarian crises is more far-reaching than ever before. Such large-scale conflicts and disasters have tested humanitarian response capacity to the limits and have challenged the ability of the humanitarian system to guarantee that such a response is effectively and appropriately applied. The expectation that larger and more visible crises will require greater capacity, quality and accountability in humanitarian response requires that the United Nations system examine — and strengthen — its current systems, tools and competencies. And the recognition that threats to human security are global and interconnected requires that humanitarian crises be tackled with common actions and joint resolve.

A. Overview

3. The Consolidated Humanitarian Appeal for 2005 reported that 26 million persons in 20 crises worldwide need US$ 4.5 billion in humanitarian assistance. Though this represents a decrease in the overall number of humanitarian crises during the past year, the financial requirements to address these crises are 25 per cent higher ($3.4 billion) — a testament that the last 12 months have witnessed a series of particularly large and destructive humanitarian crises.

4. The massive earthquake that took place off the coast of Sumatra, Indonesia, on 26 December 2004 and the resulting tsunami unleashed a series of major disasters across more than 12 nations, killing more than 240,000 persons and displacing well over a million. The hurricanes that struck the Caribbean in the fall of 2004 were the strongest storms in a decade, wreaking havoc on numerous small island developing States, many of which were unprepared for the level of devastation such storms would bring. Despite considerable early warnings, a swarm of desert locusts infested 10 different west and north African countries and decimated millions of hectares of crops in the summer of 2004. Thirty-five epidemics broke out worldwide, including polio, meningitis and tropical ulcers in the Central African Republic and an intense outbreak of the Marburg virus in Angola. The spectre of the

avian flu threatens parts of Asia with possible dire humanitarian consequences. Though the effects of disasters are difficult to measure, using preliminary figures compiled by the Collaborating Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, it is estimated that in 2004 alone there were 360 disasters affecting more than 145 million persons and causing more than $103 billion in material damage.

5. Ongoing and indiscriminate fighting continues to escalate throughout the Darfur states, resulting in looting, burning of villages and killings, and includes a high incidence of violence against women and girls and deliberate attacks against aid workers. Such insecurity has displaced more than 2.4 million persons and continues to restrict the delivery of humanitarian aid — as of April 2005, 17 per cent of the region remained inaccessible to humanitarian actors, though humanitarian needs remain high. The World Food Programme estimates that 3.25 million persons in Darfur require humanitarian assistance in 2005; this is likely to increase as populations suffer the effects of drought. Access will be further complicated by the coming rainy season that will make it very difficult for aid agencies to deliver food over the region's inadequate roads. Additionally, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reports that since the end of 2002, the number of Sudanese refugees in Chad increased from 13,000 to 225,000, raising tensions between refugee and host communities as they compete for water, firewood and grazing land.

6. Remnants of civil strife and disagreements over the distribution of tsunami aid in Sri Lanka, rising tensions between the Government and Maoist insurgents in Nepal and failed peace negotiations, disarmament programmes and prevailing insecurity in West Africa, are undermining humanitarian efforts to assist civilian populations in many areas, pitching these countries towards humanitarian crises on a larger scale. Zimbabwe is this year suffering the worst food shortages in three years as a result of drought, acute shortages of agricultural inputs and a controlled price structure. Official sources indicate that maize production is below 500,000 tonnes, less than one third of the annual requirements of 1.8 million tonnes; the Government has provisionally indicated that 2.4 million of the most vulnerable people are currently in need of food aid.

7. In several areas of the world, refugees have been able to find a solution to their plight. According to UNHCR, the global number of refugees, excluding 4.1 million Palestinians assisted by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, is an estimated 9.3 million in 2004 — the lowest level since 1980. An estimated 1.5 million refugees worldwide were able to return to Afghanistan (940,000), Angola (90,000), Burundi (90,000), Iraq (194,000) and Liberia (57,000). However, almost 400,000 asylum requests were registered in 50, mostly industrialized, countries in Asia, Europe and North America in 2004.

8. Of continued concern is the number of internally displaced persons, which far outnumber recognized refugees: today 25 million persons remain displaced by war and human rights abuses in about 49 countries; from 70 to 80 per cent of them are women and children. An additional 25 million persons have been displaced by natural disasters. These numbers have remained virtually unchanged since 2000.

B. A case for Africa

9. Prospects for peace in nine African countries, including the resolution of the long-standing crisis in Angola and Sierra Leone, and the promise of the formation of the Transitional Federal Government in Somalia, present potential opportunities to make progress on the humanitarian front. In addition, several regional and subregional organizations, such as the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the South African Development Community and its New Partnership for African Development initiative, are making great strides in promoting humanitarian assistance, peace, security and sustainable development in a number of countries across the region.

10. However, high levels of humanitarian needs persist, the challenges involved in addressing such needs remain significant and attempts to exploit such opportunities and effectively engage regional, subregional and national institutions to address these needs have not worked. If the humanitarian system is serious about ending suffering in Africa, it must be more systematic in the way it approaches humanitarian crises there. This includes taking focused and coordinated steps to identify the level of need, to build, re-establish and employ indigenous early warning, preparedness and response capacity and to commit to funding such initiatives in an equitable and predictable way.

11. Today, many parts of Africa are dominated by several crises of protection and displacement, where acute insecurity and increased violence against civilians in many areas are preventing humanitarian agencies from delivering basic services to vulnerable populations. In Darfur, the escalation of fighting, high levels of sexual and gender-based violence and the deliberate targeting and killing of humanitarian staff have dramatically reduced the ability of the humanitarian community to provide assistance and address protection concerns throughout the crisis. In northern Uganda, an increase in violence and brutal killings, abductions, rapes and attacks by the Lord's Resistance Army is preventing humanitarian agencies from expanding basic services to 1.4 million internally displaced persons. In addition, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) estimates that about 20,000 children have been abducted since 1986, serving as soldiers, porters and sex slaves, and 35,000 children continue to travel by night to avoid abduction. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the World Health Organization estimates that nearly 40,000 women and men, girls and boys have become victims of sexual and gender-based violence, compounding the human impact of a conflict that has killed more than 3.8 million civilians since 1998. In Togo, violence following the outcome of the presidential elections has triggered refugee movements (34,000 persons) to Benin and Ghana. The number of internally displaced persons is unknown.

12. The African Union has been instrumental in enhancing the protection of civilians in Darfur, as it has provided protection in displacement camps and along routes used for the collection of firewood and water and has usefully ensured a proper balance of female police officers to assist in cases of sexual violence. Substantially increasing the levels of deployment of the African Union would go a long way to improving protection to civilians in Darfur. Such practices should be replicated in other contexts.

13. Successive seasons of drought in the Horn of Africa and in southern Africa have led to loss of assets and livestock and to severe food insecurity, requiring acute

and coordinated interventions to address the underlying problems in these regions. In Eritrea alone, close to 60 per cent of the population requires food assistance and the maternal malnutrition rate of 53 per cent is among the highest in the world. In southern Africa, where some areas received as little as 10 per cent of normal rainfall between mid-January and mid-March, reports of crop failures are already becoming more and more disturbing; Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and parts of Mozambique seem worst affected. The AIDS epidemic there has only compounded humanitarian needs and increased vulnerability to drought cycles: UNICEF estimates that 4 million children orphaned by HIV/AIDS live with little access to the basics for survival; the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations estimates that countries affected by the AIDS pandemic could lose 13 to 26 per cent of their agricultural labour force by the year 2020.

14. Broad-based efforts, such as under Ethiopia's Coalition for Food and Livelihood Security, have begun to address response to drought and climate fluctuations through innovative insurance mechanisms. In southern Africa, high degrees of collaboration across the United Nations and with other stakeholders, including national Governments, donors and the Southern African Development Community non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been instrumental in preventing increases in acute malnutrition and deaths arising from hunger. However, overall levels of vulnerability are increasing in both these areas in the absence of urgent and acute interventions, requiring that coordinated and sustained engagement through these initiatives continues.

15. The locust invasion in the summer of 2004, while preventable, attests to the fact that the critical capacity that once existed in Africa has been lost or eroded. The magnitude of the locust swarm that descended upon the Sahel region of Africa overwhelmed local response capability, as many of the affected countries had not faced locust problems for over 15 years. Although the United Nations had long promoted the development of the Emergency Prevention System (EMPRES) to address such a situation, the programme in west and north-west Africa is still not operational because of the lack of donor support. Though efforts are under way to contain future locust infestations, the desert swarms will most likely form again in north-west Africa at the beginning of the summer of 2005. It is therefore essential to expand the early warning capacities and build and maintain operational capacity on the ground to reduce the scale and impact of future swarms.

16. Despite both high levels of need alongside promising opportunities, funding levels for the United Nations consolidated appeals as of May 2005 demonstrate that donors still approach humanitarian crises with insufficient resources and an uneven hand. Of the 14 appeals for Africa, 8 have received less than 20 per cent of requirements so far. And with the exception of a small flash appeal for Angola, none have received more than 40 per cent. These funding imbalances are neither new nor aberrant: an analysis of the financial tracking system for the past three years suggests that resources that pay for prominent crises (Afghanistan, Iraq, the Indian Ocean tsunami) are indeed diverted from other areas and that promises to replenish aid budgets depleted by large-scale crises are not generally kept. These concerns also apply to the chronic, uneven funding of certain neglected sectors. Such funding levels and patterns are unacceptable if Africa is to be a global humanitarian priority, as stated by so many on so many occasions. What is needed is a "new deal" for humanitarian assistance in which the donors, for their part, develop less restrictive mechanisms for the disbursements of humanitarian assistance in exchange for

humanitarian organizations agreeing to operate against agreed benchmarks as to the scale, speed and intensity of response.

III. Strengthening humanitarian capacity

17. Recent events have demonstrated that the humanitarian community is capable of launching a massive response, when called upon. However, it has become equally apparent that the quality of such a response cannot always be guaranteed: humanitarian response does not always meet the basic needs of affected populations in a timely way, response varies considerably from crisis to crisis and current capacity levels are not always sufficient to meet the demands of major emergencies occurring at the same time. While some of the factors affecting response are specific to individual crises — such as the lack of access and obstruction of aid — some of the key challenges seem to be systemic in nature.

18. The ongoing crisis in the Darfur region of the Sudan demonstrated early on the difficulties of mobilizing capacity in a complex environment and continues to underscore some fundamental weaknesses in the capacity of the humanitarian response system. For example, when the humanitarian community was authorized to respond to the crisis in Darfur, a rapid and robust response was not entirely forthcoming. Bureaucratic measures taken by the Government and the escalation of fighting by both rebel groups and Government forces delayed the early deployment of humanitarian staff. However, even when the situation stabilized, the humanitarian system was unable to quickly mobilize substantial amounts of emergency funds or field appropriately skilled and seasoned staff. And while, over time, the humanitarian community has made progress in addressing the mandate and gaps and technical weaknesses in certain sectors — water and sanitation, shelter, protection and internally displaced persons camp management — coverage in these areas remains uneven.

19. The tsunami response also highlighted some key areas where response capacity could be strengthened. For example, the leadership and performance of the resident coordinators, who acted as humanitarian coordinators, varied from country to country. Some critical common services were slow to mobilize and pre-existing standby arrangements with Governments, notably the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination teams system and the International Humanitarian Partnership, while useful, might have benefited from better coordination and a broader range of staff and expertise. Well-known sectoral weaknesses became evident almost immediately and coordination, particularly in the health sector, was patchy. Coordination among NGOs and between NGOs and the United Nations was poor. And in recent months, as the response has shifted from relief to recovery and rehabilitation, it is clear that there is a need to improve the system's ability to focus on social and economic rehabilitation alongside infrastructure projects.

20. These and other crises also demonstrate that the humanitarian system has not been entirely successful at tapping into the often significant capacity that does exist, particularly at regional and national levels. National and local leadership of the relief and recovery effort following the December 2003 earthquake in Bam, Iran, was critical to immediate life-saving efforts as well as the smooth progress to the recovery phase. Similarly, countries such as Jamaica and Cuba were able to minimize the damage caused by the 2004 hurricane season because of effective

national and community programmes that allowed them to initiate evacuation, the provision of shelter and the management of relief supplies. The African Union has been vital to establishing the conditions necessary for the quick and effective delivery of humanitarian assistance in many parts of Africa. On the other hand, systems put in place to prevent mass locust infestation in north-western Africa have not been maintained.

A. Challenges

21. While the acute, complex and concurrent crises in Darfur, in the Indian Ocean region and elsewhere have brought to light the limitations of the current system, they also offer critical insight and lessons for how performance and service delivery might be improved.

Coordination capacity

22. Cooperation and collaboration of all stakeholders at the field level is crucial to ensuring that the system-wide capacity works effectively. Lack of sectoral coordination (both within and between sectors) can lead to gaps or overlap in coverage in some areas. Weaknesses in the coordination of military assets, logistics teams and standby arrangements often mean that critical assets and resources are not always used efficiently. Inconsistent planning between relief and recovery teams may undermine the credibility established by effective response and is critical to sustaining the well-being of the population. Coordination among local, national, regional and international response teams is essential, as the inevitable convergence of multiple response actors often complicates — rather than contributes to — the overall relief and recovery effort if roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined.

23. Such weaknesses in coordination capacity require establishing more routine and formalized approaches to sector coordination among United Nations agencies and partners and improving civil-military liaison to make the best and most appropriate use of what are critical assets. System-wide efforts should also be made to establish a broader common logistics and operational support infrastructure. Strategic planning is also critical to fitting early response efforts into overall relief priorities, risk reduction, resource mobilization and long-term planning. And creating "bottom-up" coordination approaches and structures that pro-actively involve and strengthen key local players from the outset will help ensure coherence and effectiveness throughout all phases of the recovery effort.

24. When the humanitarian effects of a crisis are beyond local capabilities to resolve, or in the case of natural disasters, when international help is requested, it is the United Nations country team of agencies, funds and programmes, that, under the leadership of the humanitarian coordinator is tasked with identifying, in collaboration with operational partners, the opportunities and constraints to effective humanitarian action. However, delays and gaps in response suggest a need to strengthen field coordination structures, including a more broadly based humanitarian country team, strengthening the leadership of the humanitarian coordinator and resident coordinator, and ensuring that sufficient and flexible resources are immediately available to support field structures adequately. Coordination would also be improved through the development of international

targets for the timeliness of response, the speed of disbursement and the predictability of support.

Surge capacity

25. Speed of deployment in emergencies and disasters is essential in ensuring effective coordination and timely service delivery. Though the humanitarian system's rapid response capacity was well demonstrated during the tsunami crisis, adequate deployment of appropriate staff and material resources to the Darfur crisis was less swift. Moreover, while common services — logistics, communication and information technology, and mine action — have become mission-critical to the movement of staff, resources, the identification and analysis of needs, and the delivery of assistance, such services need to be strengthened with additional, experienced staff, skilled in a variety of technical areas, capable of leading field operations and able to deploy at short notice. Finally, the provision of rapid financial analysis and close to real-time financial tracking is critical to enhancing the timing of the funding and, as a result, the quality of the response.

26. Improving humanitarian capacity therefore requires improved mechanisms and standby arrangements that can rapidly mobilize technical expertise. Efforts have been made on the part of the United Nations system to strengthen common services, improve emergency response rosters and make rapid deployment mechanisms more nimble. Several United Nations agencies have also responded swiftly to minimize the impact of landmines on civilian populations and the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

27. However, strengthening humanitarian response capacity also requires that the humanitarian community more easily draw upon the national expertise of countries that have rapid response experience. The United Nations has collaborated with Governments to establish standby arrangements for rapid staff deployment for assessments and for emergency staffing; certain Governments have also initiated standing arrangements for the rapid deployment of staff to augment the surge capacities of United Nations agencies. Such arrangements should be strengthened further to work within — rather than in parallel with — United Nations rapid response mechanisms.

Sectoral capacity

28. Significant capacity gaps exist in water and sanitation, shelter and camp management, and protection, and such weaknesses are consistent across both disasters and emergencies. In some instances, such failings are attributable to gaps in mandate. In other cases, the humanitarian response system lacked the presence, skills and experience to perform required functions. In all cases, such weaknesses have delayed response, prevented adequate coverage and reduced the system's ability to ensure equity in the distribution of aid. There is therefore a need to reinvest in developing and maintaining systemic capacity for humanitarian response by increasing and strengthening professional staffing in key sectors, by improving common logistics and communications services and by forming and supporting strategic partnerships that tap into the large response capacity of NGOs and draw on the existing expertise of local and regional organizations. Because the protection of civilians is a responsibility that lies squarely with States, enhancing the protection of civilians requires that Member States commit to preventing and addressing the

implications of such violence — in the retraining of the national army and police to create a security sector trained in human rights law, in the demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, in the development of programmes to support women's economic empowerment and in the provision of access to medical and psychological services to victims and survivors of sexual violence. In support of these efforts, the humanitarian system must work to fill protection gaps by improving expertise, agreeing to attendant roles and responsibilities and increasing the capacity of regional organizations to act as protection forces.

Financial capacity

29. The way humanitarian crises are funded affects the system's ability to respond promptly, effectively and in a principled and impartial manner. Moreover, timely, adequate and predictable funding improves the Organization's ability further to develop and maintain response capacity where it is currently inadequate. There are many situations where crises develop or escalate rapidly, where a rapid deployment of staff in critical sectors is required or where the needs in underreported countries or sectors may go unnoticed but require substantial amounts of support. In a sudden-onset disaster, flash appeals may be too late in coming and current emergency response mechanisms, such as the Central Emergency Revolving Fund and the Emergency Response Fund, were developed more than a decade ago and may have become inadequate to the scale and speed today's crises require.

30. At the global level, improving financial capacity means (a) enabling an immediate response (e.g. providing start-up funds before pledges become liquid and providing funds when unanticipated developments lead to an increased need for humanitarian activities), (b) introducing a mechanism to ensure equitable funding of crises and of sectors to ensure funding for neglected emergencies and (c) providing funds to build up capacity to address gaps (e.g. protection, camp management).

National and local capacity

31. Building national and local preparedness and response capacity is key to a more effective response effort; engaging national and local actors in the response phase ensures that relief efforts contribute to long-term recovery. In the case of large-scale natural disasters, national and local response teams are often the most effective at carrying out rapid assessments and coordinating the initial response because they can more easily overcome obstacles that beset their international counterparts. In the context of complex emergencies, national ownership and leadership in the post-conflict phase is critical to the consolidation of peace and to building consensus around development priorities, roles, responsibilities and resources. In both emergencies and disasters, partnering with community members will facilitate long-term sustainability.

32. All too often, national and local institutions lack adequate capacity to address such humanitarian crises. When building the capacity of the humanitarian system, attention should be given to mobilizing and supporting existing capacities, knowledge and institutions through the transfer of technology and know-how and through public education. Donors and affected Governments should commit to investing much more in disaster preparedness.

B. Ways forward

33. The United Nations humanitarian response system was designed well over a decade ago and was reformed more than seven years ago. In many areas, it has stood the test of time. However, the complexity of the environment in which we now work, combined with the experiences of the past few years, dictate that we update our systems and strategies and upgrade our mechanisms and tools so that what was developed in the 1990s will be more effective in today's environment.

Humanitarian response review

34. One way forward is to examine the system's core competencies. In light of the high current levels of humanitarian demand, it is evident that there is a critical need to identify those factors that have hindered the speed and effectiveness of humanitarian response, including in the area of protection, and ensure that appropriate steps are taken to improve the timeliness and impact of humanitarian actions.

35. There are also a number of new proposals and initiatives for strengthening humanitarian capacity that might have a far-reaching effect on the humanitarian effort on a worldwide scale. Such proposals should be examined as critical opportunities to strengthen global humanitarian response capacity in a few key areas and should be evaluated in the context of how that may contribute to and improve the emergency response system of the United Nations overall.

36. To this end, the Emergency Relief Coordinator, based on his mandate in resolution 46/182, initiated an independent in-depth system-wide review of humanitarian response capacities. The review will analyse the overall humanitarian response capacities as well as the potential resources available to meet future demands for assistance and protection. The focus of the review will give attention primarily to the capacities of the United Nations, international NGOs and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. This should help achieve a common understanding of both the current response capacity and available expertise and of how the humanitarian system can effectively mobilize and deploy them. In addition, it will identify possible gaps in expertise and resources and recommend measures that need to be taken to address the shortcomings. The results of the review should be available in the summer of 2005.

New partnerships

37. Recent events have also demonstrated key areas where capacity can be strengthened through partnerships. Improved partnerships between humanitarian and development actors would improve the handover from the immediate response to recovery programmes. Partnerships within the system may be necessary to overcome those gaps in assistance — such as protection and camp management in situations involving internally displaced persons — that do not enjoy leadership from any one agency. Partnerships with Governments can serve to help build their own capacity to manage and mitigate humanitarian crises, as well as enhance rapid response capacity and expertise of international structures by providing human, technical and material resources. Partnerships and formal engagement with regional organizations would help boost the system's ability to perform key tasks that are

often beyond the ability of humanitarian agency staff to provide but that benefit the delivery of assistance overall (e.g. security).

38. Whereas up to now the role of the private sector in providing humanitarian assistance has been limited, the tsunami crisis opened up opportunities for this sector to play an important role in the humanitarian field. Increased private sector engagement in humanitarian operations raises coordination questions that should be further evaluated.

IV. Follow-up to humanitarian resolutions and the "organizational aspects" of intergovernmental dialogue

39. The effectiveness of humanitarian work, however, is not simply a matter of capacity; it also depends on the relevance of Member State dialogue, the focus and strength of intergovernmental resolutions and the ability of the United Nations system to "operationalize" such resolutions in terms of activities on the ground.

40. The recognition of this fact prompted Member States during the humanitarian affairs segment of the 2004 session of the Economic and Social Council to request a progress report on three years of Council resolutions on strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (resolutions 2002/32, 2003/5, 2004/50) to monitor follow-up and to better understand where and how resolutions may have had an impact on the humanitarian policy and practice of the United Nations. Subsequently, the General Assembly, in paragraph 4 of its resolution 59/141, emphasized the importance of the discussion of humanitarian policies and activities in the Assembly and in the Economic and Social Council and that those discussions be further revitalized by Member States.

A. Follow-up to humanitarian resolutions of the Economic and Social Council

41. General Assembly resolution 46/182 stipulated that the Secretary-General update Member States annually on humanitarian assistance through the Economic and Social Council. The humanitarian affairs segment of the Council was subsequently established by the Secretary General's reform of 1997 to "give guidance on overall humanitarian issues and coordination" (see A/51/950, para. 193) with a view to improving the management and coherence of United Nations system humanitarian activities. Since then, the humanitarian affairs segment has served as a central discussion forum on thematic humanitarian issues, resulting in two agreed conclusions (1998/1 and 1991/1), two chairman's summaries and three resolutions (2002/32, 2003/5 and 2004/50). During the past three years, these resolutions have broadly focused on the following themes:

- Coordination and response to emergencies and disasters
- Resource mobilization and humanitarian financing
- Transition from relief to development
- Protection and internal displacement
- Sexual exploitation and gender-based violence
- Disaster preparedness and risk reduction
- Gender mainstreaming
- National capacity-building and participation
- Safety and security of humanitarian personnel.

A detailed list of actions taken up in relation to humanitarian resolutions during the past three years can be found in the matrix that has been submitted as a conference room paper as a supplement to the present report (A/60/CRP.1).

B. Impact of humanitarian resolutions

42. The implementation of humanitarian resolutions, however, is only relevant if the actions that result from them lead to concrete improvements in the coordination or delivery of humanitarian assistance at headquarters or on the ground. Though such "impact" is hard to measure, as policy or programming progress is often driven (or constrained) by a variety of factors, sources and inputs, it is possible to evaluate whether and how the discussions and resolutions of the Economic and Social Council have influenced humanitarian policy and practice by analysing the Council's approach to the following thematic issues.

Humanitarian coordination

43. As articulated in resolution 46/182, the coordination of actions and actors in the often confusing aftermath of a natural disaster or the management of the multiplicity of needs in a complex emergency is critical to the overall effectiveness of response. In the context of the transition from relief to development in both post-disaster and post-conflict situations, coordination is also essential to shifting ownership from international to national actors, to ensuring that stop-gap processes are phased out in favour of enduring structures and to guaranteeing that resources are systematically mobilized and equitably applied to meet a range of needs. In past recommendations, the Secretary-General has therefore encouraged States to recognize the need for strengthened coordination mechanisms and management.

44. Economic and Social Council support to strengthening humanitarian coordination, however, remains uneven. While Member States have consistently reaffirmed the lead role of the Emergency Relief Coordinator in humanitarian response, humanitarian resolutions have stopped short of strengthening the resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator system that extends such leadership to the field. Annual affirmations in the resolutions of the United Nations coordinating role in disaster response have been met instead with the creation of regional initiatives to develop parallel disaster response and coordination structures outside the United Nations system. Economic and Social Council resolutions, however, have rightly emphasized the importance of building regional, national and local capacity to both effectively prepare for, manage and mitigate disasters and to lead the coordination of post-conflict and post-disaster phases. While NGOs have been consistently good at building local and national humanitarian response capacity in a variety of contexts, the United Nations must do much more and in a more systematic manner.

45. As the thematic cornerstone of the Council's humanitarian affairs segment, strengthening the coordination of humanitarian response in the context of disasters and complex emergencies is of primary and central concern. Such concern should be met with more focused intergovernmental attention in the form of support to those coordination mechanisms and structures that enhance the overall performance of the humanitarian system.

Resource mobilization and humanitarian financing

46. Despite generous pledges from donors in response to major crises during the past three years, funding for humanitarian assistance continues to be low, delayed and unevenly applied. The reasons for this are various, but are due, in part, to inconsistencies in the identification and prioritization of needs, the tracking and analysis of aid flows and the way such funds are sourced and disbursed.

47. While such problems had been diagnosed by the United Nations system and by donors, raising such concerns to the Economic and Social Council has contributed to policy progress in this area in substantial ways. Council debates and resolutions helped to reframe the funding agenda by successfully linking humanitarian financing with the effectiveness of assistance. The Council's endorsement of the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative has helped to broaden the debate outside donor circles, offered policy directives that have encouraged behavioural shifts and prompted discussions within donor countries and among donor groups that have led to improvements, notably to a higher rate of conversion of pledges to cash-in-hand.

48. Economic and Social Council resolutions have also lent critical intergovernmental weight to specific, technical actions towards improving both funding levels and the conditions under which such funding is sourced, allocated and managed. Economic and Social Council attention has helped launch internal processes to find common definitions of humanitarian assistance and to strengthen the analysis and reporting mechanisms for documenting, comparing and presenting needs assessments across emergencies. Council resolutions calling for the strengthening of the consolidated appeals process has helped to support United Nations-donor initiatives to improve the reporting of financial contributions and strengthen the presentation and analysis of funding patterns found therein. Improvements in the financial tracking system continue today with help from PriceWaterhouseCoopers, which has donated 8,000 man-hours to both a forensic analysis of current humanitarian aid flows for the tsunami crisis and to provide technical expertise to the system as a whole.

49. However, Economic and Social Council resolutions have had only a marginal impact on funding patterns in the areas of neglected emergencies, underresourced sectors and funding gaps, particularly for post-disaster recovery. It is in these areas that more support from Member States is needed.

Transition

50. During the past few years, countries emerging from crisis and recovering from natural disasters have required that the Council's humanitarian affairs segment focus not only on addressing enduring life saving needs, but also on identifying ways to help Governments restore authority and the rule of law, rebuild basic infrastructure and build back the livelihoods in what are fragile "transitional" phases.

51. Though the issue of the transition from relief to development had been on the intergovernmental agenda since the early 1990s, progress on it had lost momentum, as discussions tended to focus on United Nations processes, tools and internal concerns. Renewed attention to the issue in the Economic and Social Council during the past three years, which coincided with the need to support work in Afghanistan, has allowed the United Nations to revitalize the transitions discussion by promoting better coordination in transition environments, including with the international

financial institutions, and to shift the debate, refocusing transition priorities to the development of policy and processes aimed to support State ownership and leadership and, in the case of post-disaster transitions, the need to avoid reinforcing risk.

52. Though many positive initiatives have been launched to improve coordination in transitions, the humanitarian affairs segment has not managed to engage the international financial institutions successfully in getting them to relate more coherently to the United Nations humanitarian and development partners. However, significant post-conflict and post-disaster activities are ongoing in many areas of the world and require material, financial and policy support. It remains unclear what direction the humanitarian affairs segment should take with regard to transition.

Protection and internal displacement

53. Civilian victims of conflict are often forced from their homes, denied access to life-saving food, medicine and shelter and may become the primary target of attacks motivated by ethnic or religious hatred, political infighting or the ruthless pursuit of economic interests. Civilians affected by disasters have lost — often in an instant — not only their homes and belongings, but also their social networks and means of economic survival. Protecting and assisting civilian victims of conflict and disasters is therefore critical to restoring the human capital and capacity of a country. Though the primary responsibility for the protection of civilians rests with States, international support is often required, with the consent of national Governments or when the State cannot protect its citizens alone. With an estimated 50 million persons internally displaced by conflicts and disasters worldwide, protecting and assisting internally displaced persons is particularly important to stabilizing affected countries and restoring economic and social life.

54. Despite the fact that Member States have condemned certain armed groups — notably the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone and the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda — for egregious acts of violence against civilians, both protection and internal displacement remain contentious topics in the Economic and Social Council. Fears of "humanitarian intervention" elsewhere in the United Nations have overshadowed the protection debate.

55. Fundamental to the issue of protection is access, and this is where humanitarian resolutions have had a role to play. By reaffirming the responsibility of all parties to conflict to ensure the safe and unhindered access of the affected community to humanitarian assistance, and by reminding neighbouring States of their responsibility to facilitate the transit of such assistance, the Economic and Social Council has acted as a valuable advocacy tool on behalf of the humanitarian community. While the Council has been instrumental in raising awareness, it has been unable to "operationalize" such principles in the form of actions on the ground. Access continues to be routinely denied by Governments and armed groups in some crises and the Council has been unable to address critical protection needs, such as management of internally displaced persons' camps and securing communities from the threat of sexual violence. Such issues need to be taken as seriously as material relief and require a less contentious intergovernmental approach.

Gender-based violence, including sexual exploitation and abuse

56. Sexual and gender-based violence continues to be used as a weapon of war as women, girls — and some men and boys — are beaten, raped and humiliated as a means of asserting power, breaking community ties and degrading human dignity. The prevailing culture of impunity in many situations further reinforces these developments. Survivors and victims of such attacks often suffer from serious health consequences and rejection by the community; economic exclusion and social constraints often dissuade victims from seeking or receiving help. Sexual exploitation and abuse of civilians by peacekeeping or humanitarian personnel in crises is also an issue of grave concern, but one where allegations of such conduct have prompted action by the United Nations and the humanitarian community.

57. The Economic and Social Council has consistently raised these issues, although with varying impact. Though the Council called upon States to adopt preventive measures and effective responses to sexual violence and to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice, such a directive has not translated into either preventive or punitive measures on the part of States. The role the Council has played on the issue of sexual exploitation on the part of United Nations humanitarian and military staff, however, has been a positive one, reinforcing the specific actions already under way and lending support and momentum to important policy processes. For example, when efforts were under way to implement the standards developed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, it was important to have the strong language in Council resolutions when developing the Secretary-General's bulletin on special measures against sexual exploitation and abuse and when following up with the United Nations system and with NGOs on adopting standards developed by the Standing Committee as part of their own codes of conduct.

58. The use of sexual and gender-based violence as a weapon of war is a worrying, enduring problem that should remain firmly on the intergovernmental humanitarian agenda. Ending the culture of impunity that allows such violence to occur should be consistently reinforced by Member States. There is also a need for the more determined engagement of Government with civil society and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to help societies mitigate the effects of such violence, including in the field of health education. Keeping the issue of sexual exploitation of humanitarian staff on the agenda of the Economic and Social Council will continue to be important in continually reinforcing ongoing efforts being undertaken by the system.

Disaster response and risk reduction

59. The intensity, frequency and geographic scale of today's disasters require extraordinary levels of coordination to manage the proliferation of relief actors and actions and attend to a wide range of needs and circumstances. Effective management of disasters also requires consideration of risk and vulnerability and investment in risk reduction activities as part of response, recovery and development plans.

60. Economic and Social Council resolutions have been instrumental in promoting specific operational initiatives to improve the speed and effectiveness of international disaster assistance by calling for the strengthening of international urban search and rescue and, together with the efforts of such other organizations as

the International Telecommunication Union and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), by consistently encouraging States to ratify or accede to the Tampere Convention on the Provision of Telecommunication Resources for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations. These efforts proved successful, as membership in the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group has broadened and the Tampere Convention entered into force in January 2005. The Council has also supported the work being led by IFRC on the development of "guiding principles and practice on international disaster response".

61. The Economic and Social Council has also been instrumental in lending strategic policy support to humanitarian issues taken up in the General Assembly. While disaster reduction is an issue also taken up in the Assembly each fall, the Council has been able to reinforce risk reduction policy messages by asking the Assembly to give priority to integrating disaster risk reduction strategies into relevant legal, policy and planning instruments. This has been done mainly through the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, reinforced by the Hyogo Framework for Action, agreed upon at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held in Japan in January 2005.

Observations

62. The foregoing analysis of the role of the Economic and Social Council on a variety of humanitarian policy issues suggests that policy progress in some areas is easier than in others. Most importantly, it suggests that the Council has a role to play when its reporting, discussions and resolutions are clear in their intent and focus. Below are some general observations about the role of the Council and its impact on humanitarian coordination and assistance based on its performance during the past three years.

Broad policy dialogue

63. The value of the Economic and Social Council with respect to humanitarian assistance and coordination continues to be its inclusiveness as an annual platform that brings together United Nations agencies, NGOs and donor and recipient countries on issues that constrain humanitarian work. Though the Council does not serve to identify policy problems and seldom initiates policy initiatives, it has had a role to play in broadening policy debates when such issues require more broadly reflective perspectives, in reframing policy agendas when issues have been derailed and in bringing policy coherence to those areas that have fallen prey to internal debate. The codification of such discussions in the form of Council resolutions helps then to put intergovernmental weight behind critical policy priorities and activities, formalizing, endorsing and reinforcing actions already under way.

Progress and follow-up

64. The Economic and Social Council has also served as a means for tracking progress on humanitarian policy issues. Through annual reports of the Secretary-General, the United Nations system and its humanitarian partners report back to Member States on actions taken throughout the year, highlighting emerging challenges and trends. Through the adoption of humanitarian resolutions, Member States collectively endorse the policy priorities for the coming year. While such an exercise has intrinsic value, the process might be improved by a more strategic

focus of issues of concern in the reporting and in the resolutions, a more consistent approach to the way humanitarian discussions are introduced and shaped and a clearer division of labour between the work done in the Council and in the General Assembly to avoid overlap in reporting and resolution requirements. Though the foregoing examples demonstrate that it is easier to make policy progress in some areas than in others, where requested actions in resolutions are more specific, they work better. Moreover, the Council's effectiveness as a monitoring tool is contingent on its ability to promote accountability among all parts of the humanitarian system, including Member States, though the foregoing examples suggest it has been less successful in this regard. The Council would therefore benefit from broader Member State participation, particularly from those countries that are partners in or recipients of humanitarian assistance.

Promoting respect for humanitarian principles and law

65. Where Economic and Social Council resolutions have been less successful is in their ability to promote respect for humanitarian principles. While the Council's humanitarian resolutions routinely reaffirm humanitarian principles, the responsibilities of States with regard to international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law and key humanitarian guidelines and norms, the Council has failed to generate broad respect for such principles or promote compliance with them in terms of actions on the ground. Reinforcing the normative base is an important component of strengthening the humanitarian agenda that may require attention from a broader constituency than the Council can provide.

C. "Organizational aspects" of intergovernmental dialogue

66. The September summit meeting of Member States provides an important opportunity for clarifying, in particular, the respective roles that the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council should play with respect to humanitarian action and coordination. Such discussions might benefit from the following observations gleaned from experience with intergovernmental debates on humanitarian issues.

Making more strategic use of the Economic and Social Council would strengthen the humanitarian policy agenda

67. As demonstrated above, the Economic and Social Council is an important policy mechanism that would benefit from a more strategic vision and approach. Such an improved approach might (a) better define the role of the Economic and Social Council vis-à-vis that of the General Assembly and the Security Council with regard to humanitarian issues, (b) clearly and systematically identify and address gaps in the system and improve, rather than constrain, humanitarian action and (c) promote broad ownership of and accountability to issues of common concern. In particular, proposals to differentiate the work of the Economic and Social Council as a specialist technical development/humanitarian body from the substantive normative work of the Assembly would help in this regard.

The point of departure must always be what happens on the ground

68. Economic and Social Council discussions and resolutions are most effective when they are driven by issues and challenges arising from the field. The requests in Council resolutions that achieved the greatest impact were those that were rooted in and driven by field events and that had enough traction at the operational/agency and field levels to be brought forward. In this regard, concrete progress has been made in areas such as sexual exploitation and abuse, where critical thinking on a field imperative was formalized by the Council and then put to practical use. Similarly, the Council helped reinvigorate much-needed discussions on transitions, allowing the United Nations system, together with affected States, to "operationalize" some of the policy ideas into programming tools at the disposal of the entire system.

Put humanity first

69. It is in the name of our collective concern for the principle of "humanity" that the United Nations system — including its intergovernmental bodies — can make positive progress towards achieving humanitarian goals. However, this can only be achieved by reaffirming the role of the United Nations humanitarian community as acting on behalf of the needs of the vulnerable, and not the politics of States. Intergovernmental debates on humanitarian issues would be best served by a more broadly reflective agenda that allows States to move beyond self-interested positions and give in-depth consideration to those issues and events that challenge the Organization's ability effectively and responsibly to reduce pain and suffering on a worldwide scale.

V. Multidimensional missions

70. The past two years have seen an increase in the size, scale and scope of multidimensional peacekeeping operations. These developments have also resulted in the need to clarify relationships between the humanitarian, development, political and military elements of missions to better ensure that integration promotes coherence of approach when the various elements of the mission are mutually supportive and reinforcing.

71. Many humanitarian partners remain concerned that the nature and design of "integrated missions" have, in some cases, had an adverse impact on humanitarian operations. Specific concerns exist about the confusion of roles between military and humanitarian actors where quick-impact projects and "hearts and minds" campaigns take place alongside humanitarian programmes. Many non-United Nations humanitarian partner organizations have also been opposed to humanitarian coordination being fully integrated into peacebuilding and peacekeeping missions, fearing that this will have an adverse impact on their ability to assist those in need in accordance with humanitarian principles.

72. A recent independent study commissioned by the expanded Core Group of the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs entitled, *Report on Integrated* Missions: Practical Perspectives and Recommendations, identified a number of ways that the United Nations could better harness its resources to respond more efficiently and comprehensively in peacekeeping and peacebuilding situations and offered the following conclusions:

- In many circumstances, especially where there is no clear-cut distinction between active conflict and post-conflict, humanitarian actors may need uninterrupted access to all areas and communications with all actors. Therefore, mission mandates need to recognize humanitarian principles and mission design must be sufficiently flexible to ensure that the humanitarian operating environment is protected and allow for the incorporation of relevant aspects of United Nations country team capacities into operational plans.

- Humanitarian principles could be more actively safeguarded by enabling the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General responsible for humanitarian and development activities to review quick-impact projects and hearts and minds activities to ensure that they did not conflict with humanitarian activities.

- In general terms, the study recognizes the need for an agreed definition of integrated missions to better define when and how multidimensional peacekeeping operations should be applied.

- The planning and design processes are critical to effective harmonious integration and need to draw more effectively on the experience of the pre-existing United Nations country team.

- The human rights system of the United Nations is also often called upon to play the dual roles of supporting transitional processes as well as monitoring and reporting on overall human rights developments. Mission structures must also be sufficiently flexible to enable human rights actors to meet their principled and mandate-based obligations while simultaneously supporting transitional processes.

- The study also recognizes that multidimensional peacekeeping operations operate in rapidly changing political environments. For this reason, it is important to ensure regular review of both mission mandates and the appropriateness of mission structures to deliver on the agreed objectives. The regular review of major peacekeeping operations is a proposed function for the Peacebuilding Commission.

VI. Update on the use of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund and emergency cash grants

73. The Central Emergency Revolving Fund (CERF) is a cash-flow mechanism under the authority of the Under-Secretary-General/Emergency Relief Coordinator and administered by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to bridge the gap between needs and available funding throughout a crisis. Funded by donors, CERF monies are released to United Nations operational agencies at the outset of a crisis and sometimes during later phases to assist agencies with cash-flow problems before donor contributions become available. The mechanism requires that agencies pay back the loan within one year. Disbursement is usually *within four to five days and loans are normally* repaid within six months.

74. The Fund, which was created by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/182, was originally intended for use during the initial phase of complex emergencies. Its use was later expanded by the Assembly in its resolution 56/107 to

include disaster response, to address new requirements in the context of protracted emergencies and to support emergency staff safety arrangements for United Nations and associated personnel. Since its establishment in 1992, 18 United Nations agencies have accessed the fund 201 times and borrowed more than $318 million, of which $306.7 million has been reimbursed. Since June 2004, $20.9 million has been borrowed and $9.4 million reimbursed, primarily to respond to the crisis in the Sudan.

75. In the immediate aftermath of a natural disaster, the United Nations can provide emergency cash grants to countries affected by natural disasters. These grants are particularly effective because they can be used rapidly for the local purchase and delivery of life-saving relief supplies. Humanitarian crises during the past several years demonstrated that the $50,000 ceiling, which was authorized by the General Assembly in its resolution 38/202 of 20 December 1983, was insufficient to be effective in the absence of alternative means of immediate relief. In light of this observation, Member States, through Economic and Social Council resolution 2004/50, recommended that the General Assembly authorize the increase of this ceiling. Taking their lead from the Council, Member States, in Assembly resolution 59/141, decided to raise the limit of an emergency cash grant to $100,000 per country, per disaster, within the existing resources available from the regular budget.

Expanded CERF (e-CERF)

76. Though CERF and the emergency cash grant system remain important standby resource mechanisms in times of severe emergencies, consistent and timely response to humanitarian emergencies and disasters requires more robust financial mechanisms that can ensure adequate, predictable and flexible funding to enable an immediate response, provide funding for neglected emergencies and address sectoral gaps.

77. Expanding the scope and use of the current CERF will address the problems of slow and inequitable response. An expanded CERF (e-CERF) would build on the existing revolving fund mechanism to include a loan capacity and a grant component, both of which could be used for (a) immediate need (e.g. sudden onset natural disaster or conflict), (b) unanticipated costs, or (c) funding for neglected emergencies. More stringent criteria would be established for approval of grants vs. loans and a detailed mechanism for approval should be elaborated and approved by the General Assembly. A funding conference will be held for the e-CERF annually or every two years.

VII. Recommendations

Strengthen humanitarian response capacity by broadening the capacity base and improving expertise and performance benchmarks

78. There is significant deployable capacity within the system. However, such capacity is unpredictable, thin and relies on too small a core. In the event of a major crisis, the humanitarian system is often unable to pull together the right combination of expertise within the right time frame and, when doing so, will rely on the same group of people. Deployable capacity does — or did — exist, however, in countries where there are high levels of established humanitarian need, such as those in

Africa. Strengthening the capacity of the humanitarian system requires both expanding the mechanisms that can ensure appropriate and predictable deployment and tapping into existing skills and expertise to "thicken" its deployable base.

79. Significant capacity gaps exist in the areas of water and sanitation, shelter and camp management and protection. Such patterns of performance are consistent across both disasters and emergencies and are caused by a variety of factors, including limited deployable expertise and lack of predictable funding. Identifying the requisite skills and developing and funding a "preparedness capacity" in the areas of water and sanitation, health and, particularly, camp management, in crises, would help ensure better coverage in these sectors. Sectoral performance will also be improved by establishing clearer performance targets and indicators, such as were established to positive effect in the Sudan by the United Nations country team responding to the Sudan real-time evaluation.

- Expand and sustain essential common humanitarian services so that they can be predictably deployed and with the right combination of skills.
- Systematically engage to build and re-establish regional, national and local humanitarian response capacities so that the humanitarian system has immediate access to deployable resources in areas where humanitarian needs are demonstrably high, particularly in Africa.
- Identify and/or develop specialist technical expertise for major crises in water and sanitation, shelter and camp management and protection, and request the humanitarian response review to recommend the best mechanisms for achieving this objective.
- Establish finance mechanisms at the country level that ensure that critical gaps are immediately addressed.
- In sudden-onset disasters, establish performance benchmarks for the first four weeks. In complex crises, establish benchmarks from the outset of response.

Improve coordination by making more efficient use of the resources we have

80. The tsunami crisis demonstrated that there are considerable assets within the humanitarian system that would benefit from improved standby and coordination mechanisms and many proposals and initiatives have been put forth in this regard. However, such assets would be more efficiently used — and the humanitarian benefits would be potentially greater — if they are deployed under or coordinated with the United Nations and not run under their own steam. The United Nations should improve its ability to make the best use of humanitarian capacity at different levels, including regional capacity, by working out procedures where they can be deployed in a consistent manner to the benefit of affected populations. In addition, clearer and more formal coordination procedures and agreements with the military are essential.

- Establish improved mechanisms for the deployment of regional standby capacities under the leadership of the United Nations, such as through more formal agreements with regional organizations and the development of standard operating procedures for their deployment and coordination processes.

- Strengthen the procedures for the use and coordination of military assets and develop more systematic links with major providers.

- Strengthen support to resident/humanitarian coordinators and to United Nations country teams.

Strengthen financial mechanisms by expanding the use of CERF

81. The current configuration of CERF as a revolving fund remains a useful — but limited — financial instrument for humanitarian response. Though in the past it has provided temporary liquidity to humanitarian agencies, its current configuration does not allow it adequately to fill rapidly rising needs in the initial phases of an emergency, before an appeal is launched, and contributes to delays in initial response.

- Expand CERF (e-CERF) to include a grant facility component based on voluntary contributions as an advance of funds normally contributed through the consolidated appeals process, managed under the authority of the Secretary-General, the primary purposes of which are:

  – Developing and sustaining international, regional and national preparedness and standby capacity

  – Facilitating rapid deployment costs

  – Covering unanticipated increased need for essential humanitarian services

  – Addressing core needs in underfunded emergencies.

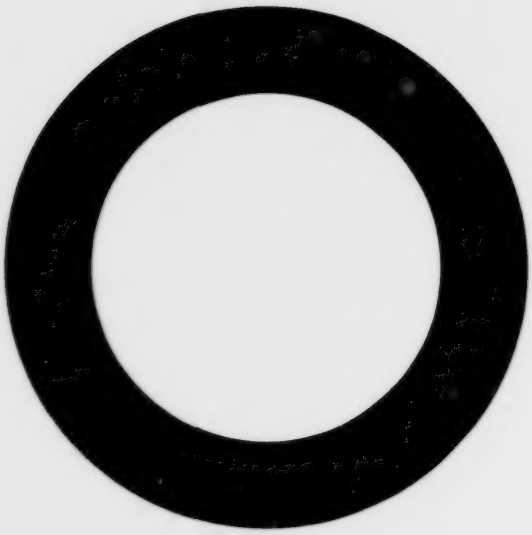
Preserve humanitarian space in integrated missions

82. The need to observe humanitarian principles in peacebuilding missions should be recognized in all mission mandates.

- Develop better mission guidelines and terms of reference so that the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General responsible for humanitarian and development activities has a clear responsibility for maintaining oversight over all quick-impact projects and hearts and minds activities that could have an impact on humanitarian action.

- As long as there is a humanitarian function, the official responsible for humanitarian coordination and his or her support office should reflect the interests of the wider humanitarian community; this may require that the coordination office is located separately from the main mission office to facilitate access for humanitarian actors.

- The humanitarian elements of the United Nations need to be more consistently engaged at the earliest stages of mission planning and design. This will require the establishment of a dedicated capacity drawn from United Nations humanitarian actors to work with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.



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Item 98 of the preliminary list*
General and complete disarmament

Report of the Open-ended Working Group to Negotiate an International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons

I. Introduction

1. By its resolution 58/241 of 23 December 2003, the General Assembly decided to establish an open-ended working group, to meet in three sessions of two weeks each, to negotiate an international instrument to enable States to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit small arms and light weapons.

2. The Assembly also decided that the open-ended working group should hold an organizational session in New York on 3 and 4 February 2004 in order to set the dates for its substantive sessions.

II. Organizational matters

A. Organization of work

3. The Open-ended Working Group to Negotiate an International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons held its organizational session at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 3 February 2004. During that meeting, the Open-ended Working Group considered organizational matters and the timetable for its substantive sessions.

4. The Disarmament and Decolonization Affairs Branch of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management and the Conventional Arms Branch of the Department for Disarmament Affairs served as the secretariat to the Working Group.

* A/60/50 and Corr.1.

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5. The 1st (organizational) meeting of the Working Group was opened by the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Nobuyasu Abe, who conducted the election of the Chairperson of the Working Group.

B. Composition of the Bureau

6. At its 1st meeting, on 3 February 2004, the Working Group elected the following officers by acclamation:

Chairman:

Anton Thalmann (Switzerland)

Vice-Chairpersons:

Marc Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Belgium)
Lucia Maria Maierá (Brazil)
Li Song (China)
José Nicolás Rivas (Colombia)
Detlev Wolter (Germany)
Sanjiv Ranjan (India)
Shutaro Omura (Japan)
Rosita Šorytė (Lithuania)
Andrea Garcia Guerra (Mexico)
Lotfi Bouchaara (Morocco)
Tamara Rastovac (Serbia and Montenegro)
Sylvester Rowe (Sierra Leone)
Ncumisa Notutela (South Africa)
Oleh Pavlyshyn (Ukraine)

C. Adoption of the agenda

7. At the same meeting, on 3 February, the Working Group adopted the provisional agenda for its organizational session, as contained in document A/AC.270/2004/L.1, as follows:

1. Opening of the meeting by the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs.
2. Election of the Chairperson.
3. Election of other members of the Bureau.
4. Adoption of the agenda.
5. Timetable for substantive sessions.
6. Other matters.

D. Dates for substantive sessions

8. At the same meeting, the Working Group decided to hold its first substantive session from 14 to 25 June 2004; its second substantive session from 31 January to 11 February 2005; and its third substantive session from 6 to 17 June 2005.

III. First substantive session

9. The Working Group held 18 meetings (2nd to 19th) during its first substantive session. At the 2nd meeting, on 14 June 2004, a statement was made by the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs.

10. At the same meeting, the Working Group adopted the provisional programme of work and provisional agenda for the session as contained in documents A/AC.270/2004/CRP.1 and A/AC.270/2004/CRP.2, respectively. The Working Group agreed to divide its work into several phases: a general debate; statements by intergovernmental organizations and representatives of civil society; a thematic debate on the three elements of tracing, namely marking, record-keeping and international cooperation; and other matters. The Chairman also produced and distributed a non-paper to assist the Working Group in its discussions.

11. Five meetings (the 2nd to 6th) were allocated to the general debate. Statements were made by the representatives of Ireland (on behalf of the European Union), Peru, South Africa, Canada, the United States of America, China, Japan, Belarus, Morocco, Australia, Nigeria (on behalf of the African Group of States), Brazil, Indonesia, New Zealand, Venezuela, Norway, Egypt, Colombia, Switzerland, the Russian Federation, the Philippines, Rwanda, Algeria, Trinidad and Tobago, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Chile, Guatemala, Argentina, the Republic of Korea, Serbia and Montenegro, Cuba, Costa Rica, Nigeria, Iran (Islamic Republic of), the Bahamas (on behalf of the Caribbean Community), Sri Lanka, Jamaica, Guyana, Nepal, Pakistan and India.

12. At its 6th meeting, on 16 June, the Working Group held an exchange of views on the character of the instrument, with statements made by the representatives of Sierra Leone, Senegal, South Africa, Ireland (on behalf of the European Union), Brazil, Morocco, Poland, the United States, the Russian Federation, China, Canada, Australia, Mexico, the Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Japan, Colombia, Nigeria, Egypt, France, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Germany and Pakistan.

13. At the 7th meeting, on 17 June, statements were made by representatives of international and regional organizations. The representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the Organization of American States, Interpol, Myanmar (on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations), the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, Armenia (on behalf of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) and Kenya (on behalf of the Nairobi Secretariat on Small Arms and Light Weapons) made statements.

14. The Working Group heard presentations from representatives of civil society at its 8th meeting. Statements were made by the representatives of the International Action Network on Small Arms, Viva Rio, Groupe de recherche et d'information sur la paix et la sécurité, Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers and Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic, and the World Forum on the Future of Sport Shooting Activities.

15. From the 9th to the 19th meetings, the Working Group conducted thematic discussions on the three elements of tracing: marking, record-keeping and international cooperation. For this phase of work, the Chairman had prepared and circulated questionnaires on these three elements in order to facilitate the discussions.

16. At its 18th meeting, on 24 June 2004, the Working Group decided to change the dates for its second substantive session from 31 January-11 February 2005 to 24 January-4 February 2005.

IV. Second substantive session

17. At its 20th meeting, on 24 January, the Working Group adopted the provisional agenda and draft programme of work for its second substantive session, as contained in documents A/AC.270/2005/L.1 and A/AC.270/2005/CRP.1, respectively. The Chairman introduced a draft text, which was based on the inputs provided by delegations during the first session of the Working Group and had been circulated to delegations in December 2004, prior to the session.

18. The Working Group proceeded with its work by conducting a general exchange of views followed by a first reading of the Chairman's draft text, paragraph by paragraph. The Working Group also held discussions on the question of the character of the instrument. Throughout the process, delegations provided written proposals and comments on the Chairman's draft text.

19. Based on the first reading and written proposals provided by delegations, the Chairman introduced a second draft at the 31st meeting, on 1 February, and the translated versions of the text were made available to the Working Group on 3 February. From the 33rd to 38th meetings, the Working Group conducted a second reading of the second draft text.

20. At the 38th meeting, on 4 February, the Chairman stated that he would prepare a third revised text well in advance of the third and final substantive session of the Working Group, taking into account the discussions held and the written proposals submitted during the second substantive session.

V. Third substantive session

21. The Working Group held its third substantive session from 6 to 17 June 2005. At its 39th meeting, on 6 June, the Working Group adopted its provisional agenda and draft programme of work for the session as contained in documents A/AC.270/2005/L.2 and A/AC.270/2005/CRP.2, respectively.

22. From the 39th to 47th meetings, the Working Group conducted a paragraph-by-paragraph reading of the third draft text prepared by the Chairman. Throughout the process, both the Chairman and delegations provided proposals on compromise language for the various paragraphs. The Chairman also designated facilitators for the following issues: definitions (Brazil), marking at import (Belgium), ammunition in all its aspects (South Africa) and the character of the instrument (India).

23. From its 48th to 53rd meetings, the Working Group conducted a second reading of the third draft text, focusing on paragraphs which lacked consensus. The Working Group proceeded with a third reading of all outstanding paragraphs from the 54th to 56th meetings.

24. At its 57th meeting, on 17 June, the Chairman presented to the Working Group his compromise proposals on all outstanding paragraphs. At the same meeting, statements were made by the delegations of Paraguay (on behalf of the Common

Market of the South), Mexico, Norway, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Argentina, Colombia, Uruguay, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Peru, Brazil, Guatemala, Ecuador, Malaysia, Indonesia, Cuba, Senegal, India, Egypt, Nigeria, Luxembourg (on behalf of the European Union), Bolivia, Spain, the United States, Jamaica, Australia, Kenya, Pakistan, Japan, Zimbabwe, Morocco, the Republic of Korea, China, Algeria, Turkey, Ghana, the Russian Federation, Canada and Israel on the character of the instrument.

25. At the 58th meeting, the Working Group considered the Chairman's compromise proposals and all outstanding paragraphs and issues. The Group also considered its draft report as contained in document A/AC.270/2005/CRP.3.

VI. Recommendations

26. In accordance with its mandate as contained in General Assembly resolution 58/241, the Working Group devoted a total of 58 meetings to negotiate an international instrument to enable States to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit small arms and light weapons. The Working Group was able to reach consensus on a draft international instrument of a political character and therefore recommends that the General Assembly adopt the draft instrument annexed to the present report at its sixtieth session.

27. The Working Group recommends that the issue of small arms and light weapons ammunition be addressed in a comprehensive manner as part of a separate process conducted within the framework of the United Nations.

28. The Working Group recommends that the issue of the applicability of provisions of the draft instrument to United Nations peacekeeping operations be considered further within the framework of the United Nations.

VII. Adoption of the report of the Open-ended Working Group

29. At its 58th meeting, on 17 June, the Working Group adopted by consensus its report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session.

Annex

Draft International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons

Preamble

States,

Noting that in the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects,[1] States identified the tracing of illicit small arms and light weapons as a key mechanism for national, regional and/or international efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate illicit small arms and light weapons and committed themselves to strengthening the ability of States to cooperate in identifying and tracing in a timely and reliable manner illicit small arms and light weapons,

Noting also that the tracing of illicit small arms and light weapons, including but not limited to those manufactured to military specifications, may be required in the context of all forms of crime and conflict situations,

Recalling the report on the feasibility of developing an international instrument to enable States to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit small arms and light weapons,[2] prepared by the Group of Governmental Experts established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 56/24 V of 24 December 2001,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 58/241 of 23 December 2003, in which the Assembly, pursuant to the recommendation of the Group of Governmental Experts, decided to establish an open-ended working group to negotiate such an instrument,

Noting that, pursuant to resolution 58/241, this instrument is complementary to, and not inconsistent with, the existing commitments of States under relevant international instruments, including the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime,[3]

Noting also that, pursuant to resolution 58/241, this instrument takes into account the national security and legal interests of States,

Convinced of the need for an effective international instrument to enable States to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit small arms and light weapons,

Stressing that all aspects relating to illicit small arms and light weapons should be addressed in a coordinated and comprehensive manner,

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[1] See *Report of the United Nations Conference on Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, New York, 9-20 July 2001* (A/CONF.192/15), para. 24.

[2] A/58/138.

[3] General Assembly resolution 55/255, annex.

Stressing also the urgent necessity for international cooperation and assistance, including financial and technical assistance, as appropriate, to support and facilitate efforts to effectively implement this instrument,

Have agreed henceforth as follows:

I. General provisions

1. The purpose of this instrument is to enable States to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit small arms and light weapons.

2. The purpose of this instrument is also to promote and facilitate international cooperation and assistance in marking and tracing and to enhance the effectiveness of, and complement, existing bilateral, regional and international agreements to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

3. This instrument does not restrict the right of States to acquire, manufacture, transfer and retain small arms and light weapons for their self-defence and security needs, as well as for their capacity to participate in peacekeeping operations, in a manner consistent with the Charter of the United Nations.

II. Definitions

4. For the purposes of this instrument, "small arms and light weapons" will mean any man-portable lethal weapon that expels or launches, is designed to expel or launch, or may be readily converted to expel or launch a shot, bullet or projectile by the action of an explosive, excluding antique small arms and light weapons or their replicas. Antique small arms and light weapons and their replicas will be defined in accordance with domestic law. In no case will antique small arms and light weapons include those manufactured after 1899:

(a) "Small arms" are, broadly speaking, weapons designed for individual use. They include, inter alia, revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, sub-machine guns, assault rifles and light machine guns;

(b) "Light weapons" are, broadly speaking, weapons designed for use by two or three persons serving as a crew, although some may be carried and used by a single person. They include, inter alia, heavy machine guns, hand-held under-barrel and mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-aircraft guns, portable anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles, portable launchers of anti-tank missile and rocket systems, portable launchers of anti-aircraft missile systems, and mortars of a calibre of less than 100 millimetres.

5. For the purposes of this instrument, "tracing" is the systematic tracking of illicit small arms and light weapons found or seized on the territory of a State from the point of manufacture or the point of importation through the lines of supply to the point at which they became illicit.

6. For the purposes of this instrument, small arms and light weapons are "illicit" if:

(a) They are considered illicit under the law of the State within whose territorial jurisdiction the small arm or light weapon is found;

(b) They are transferred in violation of arms embargoes decided by the Security Council in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations;

(c) They are not marked in accordance with the provisions of this instrument;

(d) They are manufactured or assembled without a licence or authorization from the competent authority of the State where the manufacture or assembly takes place; or

(e) They are transferred without a licence or authorization by a competent national authority.

III. Marking

7. The choice of methods for marking small arms and light weapons is a national prerogative. States will ensure that, whatever method is used, all marks required under this instrument are on an exposed surface, conspicuous without technical aids or tools, easily recognizable, readable, durable and, as far as technically possible, recoverable.

8. For the purpose of identifying and tracing illicit small arms and light weapons, States will:

(a) At the time of manufacture of each small arm or light weapon under their jurisdiction or control, either require unique marking providing the name of the manufacturer, the country of manufacture and the serial number, or maintain any alternative unique user-friendly marking with simple geometric symbols in combination with a numeric and/or alphanumeric code, permitting ready identification by all States of the country of manufacture; and encourage the marking of such additional information as the year of manufacture, weapon type/model and calibre;

(b) Taking into account that import marking is a requirement for the States parties to the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, require to the extent possible appropriate simple marking on each imported small arm or light weapon, permitting identification of the country of import and, where possible, the year of import and enabling the competent authorities of that country to trace the small arm or light weapon; and require a unique marking, if the small arm or light weapon does not already bear such a marking. The requirements of this subparagraph need not be applied to temporary imports of small arms and light weapons for verifiable, lawful purposes, nor for the permanent import of museum artefacts;

(c) Ensure, at the time of transfer from government stocks to permanent civilian use of a small arm or light weapon that is not marked in a manner that allows tracing, the appropriate marking permitting identification of the country from whose stocks the transfer of the small arm or light weapon is made;

(d) Take all necessary measures to ensure that all small arms and light weapons in the possession of government armed and security forces for their own use at the time of adoption of this instrument are duly marked. Markings on these small arms and light weapons do not necessarily have to meet the requirements of subparagraph 8 (a) above;

(e) Encourage manufacturers of small arms and light weapons to develop measures against the removal or alteration of markings.

9. States will ensure that all illicit small arms and light weapons that are found on their territory are uniquely marked and recorded, or destroyed, as soon as possible. Pending such marking, and recording in accordance with section IV of this instrument, or destruction, these small arms and light weapons will be securely stored.

10. States will ensure that every small arm or light weapon always receives the unique markings prescribed in subparagraph 8 (a) above. A unique marking should be applied to an essential or structural component of the weapon where the component's destruction would render the weapon permanently inoperable and incapable of reactivation, such as the frame and/or receiver, in compliance with paragraph 7 above. States are encouraged, where appropriate to the type of weapon, also to apply the marking prescribed in subparagraph 8 (a) above or other markings to other parts of the weapon such as the barrel and/or slide or cylinder of the weapon, in order to aid in the accurate identification of these parts or of a given weapon.

IV. Record-keeping

11. The choice of methods for record-keeping is a national prerogative. States will ensure that accurate and comprehensive records are established for all marked small arms and light weapons within their territory and maintained in accordance with paragraph 12 below in order to enable their competent national authorities to trace illicit small arms and light weapons in a timely and reliable manner.

12. From the time of the adoption of this instrument, records pertaining to marked small arms and light weapons will, to the extent possible, be kept indefinitely, but in any case a State will ensure the maintenance of:

(a) Manufacturing records for at least 30 years; and

(b) All other records, including records of import and export, for at least 20 years.

13. States will require that records pertaining to small arms and light weapons held by companies that go out of business be forwarded to the State in accordance with its national legislation.

V. Cooperation in tracing

General

14. While the choice of tracing systems will remain a national prerogative, States will ensure that they are capable of undertaking traces and responding to tracing requests in accordance with the requirements of this instrument.

15. States receiving information related to tracing illicit small arms and light weapons in accordance with the provisions of this instrument and in the context of a tracing request will respect all restrictions placed on its use. Furthermore, States will guarantee the confidentiality of such information. Restrictions on use may include, inter alia:

(a) The information exchanged will be released only to competent authorities designated by the requesting State and/or authorized personnel, to the extent necessary for the effective implementation of this instrument;

(b) The information exchanged will be used only for purposes consistent with this instrument; or

(c) The information exchanged may not be released to anyone else without the prior consent of the State providing that information.

Where for legal, constitutional or administrative reasons, the confidentiality of the information cannot be guaranteed or the restrictions placed on its use in accordance with the present paragraph cannot be maintained by the requesting State, the requested State will be so informed at the time the tracing request is made.

Tracing requests

16. A State may initiate a tracing request in relation to small arms and light weapons found within its territorial jurisdiction that it considers to be illicit under the provisions of paragraph 6 above.

17. To ensure smooth and effective cooperation in tracing, requests for assistance in tracing illicit small arms or light weapons will contain sufficient information, including, inter alia:

(a) Information describing the illicit nature of the small arm or light weapon, including the legal justification therefor and, to the extent possible, the circumstances under which the small arm or light weapon was found;

(b) Markings, type, calibre and other relevant information to the extent possible;

(c) Intended use of the information being sought.

Responses to tracing requests

18. States will provide prompt, timely and reliable responses to tracing requests made by other States.

19. States receiving a tracing request will acknowledge receipt within a reasonable time.

20. In responding to a tracing request, the requested State will provide, subject to paragraph 22 below, all available information sought by the requesting State that is relevant for the purpose of tracing illicit small arms and light weapons.

21. The requested State may seek additional information from the requesting State where a tracing request does not contain the information required in paragraph 17 above.

22. States may delay or restrict the content of their response to a tracing request, or refuse to provide the information sought, where releasing the information would compromise ongoing criminal investigations or violate legislation providing for the protection of confidential information, where the requesting State cannot guarantee the confidentiality of the information, or for reasons of national security consistent with the Charter of the United Nations.

23. If a State delays or provides a restricted response to a tracing request, or refuses to provide the information sought, on the grounds identified in paragraph 22 above, it will inform the requesting State of the reasons for this. The requesting State may subsequently seek clarification of this explanation.

VI. Implementation

General

24. In accordance with their constitutional processes, States will put in place, where they do not exist, the laws, regulations and administrative procedures needed to ensure the effective implementation of this instrument.

25. States will designate one or more national points of contact to exchange information and act as a liaison on all matters relating to the implementation of this instrument.

26. States will cooperate on a bilateral and, where appropriate, on a regional and international basis to support the effective implementation of this instrument.

International cooperation and assistance

27. States in a position to do so will, upon request, seriously consider rendering technical, financial and other assistance, both bilaterally and multilaterally, in building national capacity in the areas of marking, record-keeping and tracing, in order to support the effective implementation of this instrument by States.

28. States in a position to do so are also encouraged to seriously consider international cooperation and assistance to examine technologies that would improve the tracing and detection of illicit small arms and light weapons, as well as measures to facilitate the transfer of such technologies.

29. States will encourage initiatives, within the framework of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects,[1] that mobilize the resources and expertise of, and where appropriate cooperation with, relevant regional and international organizations to promote the implementation of this instrument by States.

United Nations

30. States will cooperate, as appropriate, with the United Nations to support the effective implementation of this instrument.

31. States will, as soon as possible after the adoption of this instrument, provide the Secretary-General, through the Department for Disarmament Affairs of the Secretariat, with the following information, updating it when necessary:

(a) Name and contact information for the national point(s) of contact;

(b) National marking practices related to markings used to indicate country of manufacture and/or country of import as applicable.

32. States hereby request the Secretary-General to collate the information provided by States pursuant to paragraph 31 above and to issue it to States Members of the United Nations, providing the assistance requested for the implementation of the instrument by States, as well as assisting States to interact on a bilateral basis.

International Criminal Police Organization

33. States, where appropriate, will cooperate with the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) to support the effective implementation of this instrument.

34. States that are members of Interpol will promote the implementation of this instrument when participating in Interpol's organs.

35. States, where appropriate, in accordance with Interpol's statutory rules, are encouraged to make full use of Interpol's mechanisms and facilities in implementing this instrument. Interpol may, at the request of the concerned State, assist in the following areas:

(a) Facilitation of tracing operations conducted within the framework of this instrument;

(b) Investigations to identify and trace illicit small arms and light weapons;

(c) Wherever possible, building national capacity to initiate and respond to tracing requests.

VII. Follow-up

36. States will report on a biennial basis to the Secretary-General on their implementation of this instrument including, where appropriate, national experiences in tracing illicit small arms and light weapons as well as measures taken in the field of international cooperation and assistance. This report may form part of a State's national report on its implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

37. States will meet on a biennial basis to consider the reports mentioned in paragraph 36 above. These meetings will be held within the framework of relevant meetings convened for the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, where such meetings are in fact convened.

38. States will review the implementation and future development of this instrument within the framework of conferences that review the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

United Nations A/60/89–E/2005/79

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Item 74 (a) of the preliminary list*
Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2005
New York, 29 June-27 July 2005
Item 5 of the provisional agenda**
Special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance

The transition from relief to development

Report of the Secretary-General†

Summary

The present report is submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 59/141 and Economic and Social Council resolution 2004/50, in which the Assembly and the Council requested the Secretary-General to report on the issue of transition from relief to development, with the aim of improving the international community's efforts to better respond to transition situations in support of the efforts by affected States. To this end, the report draws on case studies from countries undergoing both post-disaster recovery and transition from conflict to peace to discuss the specific challenges of national ownership, coordination and financing.

* A/60/50 and Corr.1.

** E/2005/100.

† The report was delayed for technical reasons.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report annually to the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance. The report is also submitted in response to the requests contained in General Assembly resolution 59/141 of 15 December 2004 and Economic and Social Council resolution 2004/50 on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.

II. Context

2. In the aftermath of disasters and emergencies, there is often a period between the emergency and development phases when humanitarian needs must be met and the long-term benefits of rehabilitation and reconstruction have yet to be fully realized. While in the past such transitions were largely regarded as a sequential progression from relief to development, it is now recognized that there are various aspects of transition processes that must be addressed simultaneously.

3. All transition situations are unique and therefore require flexible responses adapted to the specific context and circumstances of the country. However, all types of transition processes have one common feature: national ownership of the transition process, whether it be in response to natural disaster, economic transformation or conflict, is the key to successful and sustainable recovery and development efforts and to lasting peace.

4. In post-disaster transitions, recovery tends to be broad in scope, as disasters can affect several countries simultaneously. Post-disaster transitions also occur soon after the crisis phase, often beginning within weeks of the initial disaster and leaving little time for post-crisis planning. Post-disaster transitions also typically take place in the context of a functioning State. Therefore, they usually feature a relatively straightforward relationship between national and international actors and institutions. Nonetheless, disasters often wipe out critical infrastructure, government capacity and hard-won development gains, requiring that post-disaster transition phases also include sustained support for the immediate restoration of livelihoods and basic social services, as well as for preparedness measures and activities that reduce future disaster vulnerability. It is critical that disaster-recovery programming be developed together with affected Governments and communities and with an awareness of the existing socio-economic situation.

5. Recovery from drought poses a set of unique challenges. Although like most disasters the impact of drought depends on the interplay between a natural event and socio-economic policies, drought differs from most disasters in that it is slow in onset and may continue in cycles or for a prolonged period of time. If the effects of drought are left unchecked, the fight over scarce resources that could ensue could aggravate existing tensions and political instability and lead to violence. The United Nations approach to drought has therefore sought to simultaneously address humanitarian concerns, while working with Governments to identify and address the underlying social and environmental factors that may increase the impact of drought and increase food insecurity.

6. Post-conflict transition situations are complex and are characterized by the close interplay of political, security, human rights, humanitarian and development imperatives. Conflict-related emergencies rarely end neatly. Insecurity may persist to varying degrees, government structures may be incapacitated or destroyed, and the root causes of the conflict may not be adequately addressed by negotiated political solutions that have yet to take root, often causing conflicts to resurface. Post-conflict transition operations, in particular, involve a complex web of political, peacekeeping, human rights, humanitarian and development activities geared towards consolidating peace, supporting restoration of State and government institutions and reinforcing human security. Such activities may need to occur simultaneously, at varying levels of intensity, and would be constantly susceptible to both setbacks and opportunities. As with post-disaster transitions, however, it is critical that the desired goal of all these efforts, or the vision of the post-recovery end state, be developed by and with affected Governments, civil society and communities.

7. The key challenges in post-disaster, drought and post-conflict transitions will be further elaborated in the present report. Case studies that highlight lessons learned and best practices are provided for each challenge. In the case of the sections on post-disaster and post-conflict situations, a discussion is included of additional measures that should be taken or have been taken by the United Nations system and others to strengthen response. The report concludes with a series of implications for future action.

III. Post-disaster recovery

A. National and local ownership and participation

8. National ownership of and participation in the design and implementation of recovery programmes are essential not only to achieve the desired impact of recovery efforts and their sustainability, but also to strengthen capacities on the ground. The participation of local disaster-management experts and technicians will help to ensure that recovery programming considers the needs and capacities of the affected population. The involvement of national decision makers is critical to building a consensus around recovery priorities, roles, responsibilities and resources. To ensure that such ownership by national actors takes hold, external support must empower local actors and strengthen institutions through the transfer of technology and know-how and through public education. Such an approach should include assistance in mapping hazards and risks and the formulation and/or revision of risk-reduction measures. International investment is also needed at the local community, national and regional levels in preparedness, response capabilities and disaster mitigation, including advocacy and awareness campaigns, and the development of early warning capacities and training exercises.

9. In situations where local government capacity has been weakened by a disaster, *targeted support to help the authorities* coordinate the disaster response becomes vital. In Grenada, which suffered loss of life and material damage following the 2004 hurricane season, the United Nations has supported the Government in formulating a national reconstruction plan, which includes guidelines for the construction of hurricane-resistant housing, strengthening

government capacity in public information and communications and disaster risk reduction. The Government, with the support of the United Nations, also established the Agency for Reconstruction and Development in December 2004 to assist in the social, economic and physical recovery of Grenada through the application of specialist expertise; effective collaboration with Government ministries, development partners and other stakeholders; and the transparent stewardship of local and international resources. It is essential that the very close relationship that has been established with the Agency be continued. Although faced with start-up challenges of its own, a strong technical entity such as the Agency can push ahead with a focused reconstruction programme and priorities, one of which must include the implementation of the coordination and reporting mechanism that has been developed and discussed.

10. Equally important to an effective and smooth transition is support to local and community structures. Local involvement in the recovery effort following the earthquake in December 2003 in the city of Bam, Islamic Republic of Iran, has been critical both for the smooth progress of the transition and as a mechanism for building and strengthening local capacity. Immediately following the earthquake, emergency response efforts were led by the Government and the Iranian Red Crescent, which has significant technical capacity in all aspects of disaster risk reduction and management. However, at the time, the strong institutional arrangements at the national level were not matched at the local and intermediate levels. In the recovery phase, the United Nations and its partners have promoted participatory approaches and decentralized planning and programming, involving direct consultation with the affected communities, and have supported the Government in adopting and implementing community-centred approaches. This has included the provision of support to local authorities in promoting, supervising and guiding planning and construction processes, in line with local codes and practices.

11. Similarly, early recovery efforts in the Indian Ocean region following the tsunami of December 2004 were driven by the need to respond urgently, and were focused on providing technical and financial support to government actors and institutions. With support from United Nations agencies, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and civil society, decentralized capacities that promote participatory approaches to recovery are now being strengthened. National Governments are taking ownership and becoming involved in all recovery processes. In this way, it is hoped that sensitive issues, such as land rights or the special vulnerabilities of minorities and migrant populations, can be addressed.

12. Effective communication with local populations about recovery activities is another means of reducing confusion and distress in a post-disaster community and better involving them in the recovery process. Following the relief effort in Bam, the momentum created by promises to reconstruct the city quickly was transformed into a variety of proposals and schemes that raised local expectations and resulted in a growing sense of confusion and unrest. It was clear that a strategy was needed to address and respond to community expectations, to inform the affected population of their rights and to highlight both the potential benefits and limitations of the reconstruction process. The United Nations launched a community-based information management programme that now issues a biweekly newsletter and mobilizes volunteers for dissemination of information on reconstruction strategies and plans and on people's entitlements and needs. A similar newsletter is currently being produced in Sri Lanka. Community-based information management

programmes have also been crucial in addressing regional disparities to ensure that all regions benefit from the reconstruction efforts and are better off than they were before. Community mobilization and self-help form a cornerstone and a key organizing principle for demand-driven local recovery programmes, and strengthen the capacity of the community to play its role effectively.

B. Coordination

13. The primary responsibility for coordination in a post-disaster setting rests with the national authorities. Experience demonstrates, however, that national capacities are frequently overwhelmed by the volume and speed of response by a multiplicity of actors. External actors can facilitate the Government's coordination role by recognizing that their level of commitment to coordination and coherence has a direct impact on a Government's effectiveness, particularly in countries with less developed systems that require additional capacity strengthening.

14. The coordination challenges in any disaster recovery effort are often complex. Coordination of operations is labour intensive, in both traditional sectors, such as shelter and camp management, and in information management, resource mobilization and financial tracking. Coordination among local, national, regional and international response teams is essential, as the inevitable convergence of multiple-response actors can complicate, rather than strengthen, the overall recovery effort if field coordination structures are weak and roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined from the outset. Finally, because post-disaster transitions take place at an accelerated and sometimes uneven pace (both within and across countries), coordination and planning mechanisms must be in place and operational within a relatively short time and must be tailored to the country-specific context.

15. While the United Nations system has well-developed capacities for the coordination of response to disasters and humanitarian assistance, mechanisms for the coordination of post-disaster recovery activities need to be further strengthened. Progress has been made in ensuring greater capacity for recovery activities. Within 24 hours of the Indian Ocean tsunami, recovery advisers were deployed to support the Resident Coordinators. In addition, the Special Coordinator for Humanitarian Response was accompanied by a representative from the United Nations Development Group to strengthen the link between relief and development. Recovery teams were also at full capacity in affected countries within two weeks. Nevertheless, coordination gaps remain, and the tsunami response has highlighted the need to conduct assessments of early recovery needs, to set up predictable mechanisms for the deployment of technical experts to support recovery planning and to better coordinate post-crisis funding. Moreover, while the system of leadership accountability for emergency response is well defined at both the headquarters and field levels, similar systems for disaster recovery still require strengthening.

16. It is widely accepted that disaster recovery programmes that emphasize physical reconstruction and the restoration of basic services are insufficient to address the complete range of recovery needs. Rather, post-disaster recovery must contribute to improving the living conditions of the affected population through the revival of production, trade and services and the creation of income-generating and employment opportunities. Lessons emerging from the recovery effort in Bam

suggest that shortcomings in the planning and coordination of recovery efforts led to key revitalization efforts being overlooked. More than one year after the tragedy, the reconstruction process is slow. Most of the city's inhabitants are still living in tents and provisional shelters and many lack access to basic medical care.

17. Coordination challenges are also apparent in those countries affected by the Indian Ocean tsunami. Although expert recovery teams were dispatched by the United Nations within two weeks of the crisis to compile information on disaster damage and recovery needs and to begin supporting national authorities in recovery planning, the pace of recovery since then has been relatively slow. This is due in part to an overall gap in recovery planning that has left key national entities and some United Nations country teams overstretched. In addition, there have been delays in the provision of recovery assistance in critical sectors, such as the construction of permanent housing and water and sanitation facilities, or the recovery or replacement of boats and reconstruction of commercial premises to jump start local economies. In some countries that have drawn up national reconstruction plans, there could have been better coordination of national and international recovery priorities among government actors, United Nations agencies and international financial institutions. While United Nations leadership accountability and reporting lines are clear in the disaster emergency phase, such structures are not as strong for the recovery period.

18. Senior coordination advisers for recovery have been deployed to the three most affected countries, namely, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Maldives, to support the role played by Resident Coordinators. In each case, the Resident Coordinator recognized the need for senior-level support to the United Nations country team in the development and coordination of a United Nations strategic plan that would respond to the priorities included within a national recovery plan while also providing support to established funding mechanisms in the countries. The senior coordination advisers for recovery have played that role.

C. Funding

19. Adequate and sustained support must be given to the post-disaster recovery and reconstruction effort as early as possible. The lack of an adequate and predictable funding base for disaster recovery widens sectoral and coordination gaps and impedes recovery planning. However, past experience suggests that while humanitarian assistance funding is readily available — and often abundant — during the phase of immediate response to a disaster, such support drops off once the initial response is complete and media and public interest has subsided. Such was the case after Hurricane Mitch in 1998 and the earthquake in Bam in December 2003, where only a small percentage of funds promised were ever paid out. Such patterns suggest that, if current practices continue, affected countries and the United Nations alike may have only a limited window of opportunity to raise disaster relief and recovery funds. Mechanisms for funding disaster relief may therefore need to include recovery efforts and to provide sufficient flexibility/fungibility to allow national authorities and external actors to determine the best use of available resources when making allocation decisions to humanitarian and recovery priorities.

20. Owing to the flexibility with which the flash appeal mechanism was used following the Indian Ocean tsunami, it was possible to raise resources for early

recovery in key sectors such as shelter, livelihood, microinfrastructure, fishing industries and the environment, which allowed recovery plans and programmes to be implemented without delay. This enabled timely relief and emergency interventions to help local populations get back on their feet. In Indonesia, rubble removal operations undertaken as "cash for work" reduced the psychological stress of the population while injecting cash into the local economy. The United Nations system, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank jointly conducted a full assessment of post-disaster recovery needs, and are providing support to the Governments of India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Maldives in exploring how to address those needs.

21. However, experience has shown that the flash appeal mechanism alone has not been the ideal vehicle for mobilizing resources for recovery purposes. India, which had response capacities in place and therefore did not participate in the flash appeal, has reported great difficulty in raising resources for recovery purposes. Alternative mechanisms are needed to fill this gap.

D. Investing in preparedness and risk reduction

22. Failure to invest in disaster risk reduction and preparedness and in post-disaster recovery and rehabilitation as integral components of sustainable development efforts puts already vulnerable countries at even greater risk. The integration and prioritization of disaster risk management into national development plans and budgets, as well as Government and international commitment to concrete preparedness activities, can effectively mitigate the impact of even large-scale hazards. Attention to risk reduction and prevention strategies can also curb vulnerability to disasters in the long term. Moreover, a focus on risk reduction in the recovery phase allows countries and communities to go beyond replacing damaged infrastructure and to address development deficits and bring living conditions to a level above pre-disaster standards.

23. For example, the worst human and economic losses sustained by Caribbean island States during the unusually intense hurricane season late in 2004 affected the most vulnerable segments of the population in Haiti and Grenada. Neither of these countries was prepared for the scale and intensity of the event. In the case of Haiti, the impact of the hurricane-related floods was further exacerbated by extreme environmental degradation brought on by ecologically harmful land use. In contrast, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic and Cuba recorded much lower levels of loss and damage.

24. Such disparity in the level of impact is directly related to government commitment to concrete preparedness and risk-reduction activities. More than 15 years ago, the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management in Jamaica began a programme to transfer skills to communities in the areas of search and rescue, first aid, contingency planning, shelter management and early warning. Community teams were formed and supported by the Government, the Jamaica Red Cross and local civil society. During the 2004 hurricane season, communities with those skills systematically responded better to events and were better able to assist themselves and response agencies with evacuation and shelter management and the distribution of relief and recovery supplies. After Hurricane Ivan, the Prime Minister of Jamaica called for the Caribbean region to establish a fund that countries

could access for hurricane recovery and reconstruction and called for Caribbean countries to develop a common policy on natural hazard risk reduction and to integrate that policy into their national planning and development efforts. Jamaica is currently drafting a national hazard mitigation policy (2005).

25. To promote regional preparedness throughout the Caribbean, the United Nations set up a regional inter-agency standing committee and a relief, disaster and emergency task force in Panama in 2005. In addition to coordinating regional response and preparedness, the task force provides a platform for the exchange of information and consensus-building in determining the priority actions in the Latin American and Caribbean region. Comprehensive plans to put preparedness measures into place, including strengthening government capacity and working with local communities to change land use patterns that exacerbate the effects of hurricanes, need to be explored and implemented urgently on a regional basis. Along these lines, a lessons-learned workshop for eastern Caribbean countries was held in June 2005 in Jamaica, in the framework of the United Nations Disaster Management and Training Programme, to learn from the 2004 hurricane season. In addition, for the past several years, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies has been hosting, with national Societies, an annual pre-hurricane-season planning and preparedness workshop with hurricane-prone countries, the United Nations, donor agencies and non-governmental organizations. The most recent such meeting, held in June in Panama, led to the development of a memorandum of understanding among the Government of Panama, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Food Programme and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies on the pre-positioning of relief stocks at the Red Cross/Red Crescent base in Panama.

26. In the Indian Ocean region, both international and national organizations working in the tsunami recovery effort have aimed at balancing the need for rapid recovery while addressing the structural causes of risk and vulnerability. Such efforts have included public consultations in Indonesia, where experiences with prior disasters were analysed and integrated into new shelter strategies and environmental preservation. While it is generally accepted that it would have been almost impossible to be adequately prepared for an event of this magnitude and impact, the tsunami disaster prompted a new resolve to create a region-wide early warning system for tsunamis and other predictable hazards. Similarly, long-term preparedness strategies supported by the United Nations and the Government of India (following previous natural catastrophes in Gujarat and Orissa) proved critical in the early hours of the tsunami and demonstrated how preparedness at both the national and local levels could save lives. Since the tsunami, India and the international community have resolved to intensify and extend disaster risk-management programmes along the following lines: incorporation of disaster risk-management in all recovery and reconstruction efforts; conduct of comprehensive multi-hazard risk assessments; establishment of clear risk-reduction guidelines sector by sector; and the strengthening of emergency response capacities at all levels.

27. However, despite compelling evidence that risk-reduction efforts are linked to improved opportunities for sustainable development, obtaining funds for capacity-building and investment in reducing vulnerability and risk continues to be a challenge. That area continues to receive much lower levels of resources from the donor community compared to the funding available for humanitarian response and

conflict situations. Disaster-reduction efforts need to be increasingly promoted as a solid investment towards saving lives and reducing loss and as fundamental to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development in general.

IV. Drought

28. The humanitarian crisis that continues to ravage southern Africa has challenged traditional response and assistance approaches. While the crisis first appeared on the humanitarian map as one precipitated by drought, closer analysis showed that the causal factors and drivers of the crisis were more complex and deeply rooted, and involved a number of factors in addition to climate change and inadequate rainfall. This realization demonstrated the need to rethink responses and to develop innovative and creative approaches to address the needs of the most vulnerable across the region. In short, it was recognized that while there was clearly a humanitarian crisis in southern Africa, traditional responses were not the answer.

29. Since the beginning of 2004, the work of the United Nations has been guided by the so-called "triple threat" approach: simultaneously tackling food insecurity, HIV/AIDS and weakened capacity for governance. This approach promoted a blurring of the lines between emergency relief and development assistance and contributed to providing a practical environment in which United Nations agencies work together collaboratively, using common, and even joint, programming initiatives to address the identified priorities.

30. The triple threat approach, developed under the leadership of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Humanitarian Needs in Southern Africa and included in a paper prepared by the High-level Committee on Programmes, acknowledged that southern Africa required simultaneous humanitarian and development action to address the three priorities. Accordingly, the United Nations and its partners requested donors to support immediate actions to address immediate needs and immediate action to address long term needs. In a region where life expectancy and other human capacity and economic indicators have been in reverse for several years, largely due to the impact of HIV/AIDS, the United Nations has recognized that the conventional concept of "recovery" has little meaning. The region will continue to experience shocks from natural hazards, such as floods, droughts and cyclones. However, poverty and the levels of vulnerability across the region have meant that assistance is geared towards arresting increases in vulnerability.

31. A key lesson to understanding the approach in southern Africa can be drawn from the response and follow-up to the drought-induced food security crisis in 1992/93. Following the largely successful response, the humanitarian community vowed that this would never be allowed to happen again, believing that effective development assistance would ensure regional food security. However, a decade later, a regional crisis of immense proportions has happened again, this time with a much more complex set of issues and causes, many of which had been ignored in the conventional development response in the preceding years.

32. Relief, recovery, and development support are needed in this region simultaneously, allowing households and communities who find themselves on different rungs of the development ladder to meet their immediate needs while

engaging in appropriate activities with a longer-term vision. Safety nets and social protection programmes are increasingly needed within long-term strategies, while appropriate rehabilitation and economic development activities should be considered during relief periods. The relief-development continuum has dissolved in the face of recurrent shocks, rampant poverty and the omnipresent impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

33. The inter-agency regional humanitarian strategic framework for southern Africa, which is developed through the United Nations Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Support Office for the Special Envoy and supported by the new United Nations Regional Director's team, includes new "recovery" perspectives shared jointly by the United Nations and the non-governmental organizations community. The framework provides a basis for short- and long-term responses in which humanitarian and development players take joint action, meeting immediate needs while working to prevent and mitigate vulnerability to future shocks and risks, build livelihood resilience and enhance economic and social growth.

Funding

34. The multifaceted nature of the crisis in southern Africa poses particular resourcing challenges. The depiction of the crisis as one that was simply driven by drought brought forward the use of the traditional emergency funding tool, the consolidated appeal. While regional and country-specific requirements were multisectoral, over 80 per cent of requirements were for food assistance activities. As analysis of the triple threat approach developed, the need for broader responses has become increasingly apparent, as has the need for more creative solutions to enable the most vulnerable to access food and necessary social services. The request for donors to support immediate actions to address immediate needs and immediate action to address long-term needs challenged the continued use of the consolidated appeal as the most appropriate (or accepted) mechanism for mobilizing resources, particularly in areas that support the critical social safety net provisions needed in many countries in the region.

35. While there is a palpable shift in the region by donors to assist responsible Governments to strengthen capacity for provision of social services through direct budgetary support, immediate outreach to support the millions of chronically vulnerable people in the region will remain insufficient for several years to come. Further shocks caused by inclement weather, such as the dry spell that has decimated harvests in Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique this year, continue to require donors to keep unlocked resources for short-term emergency responses. Only through a flexible and informed approach by donors that addresses the complexity of needs in the region will it be possible to arrest the decline in life expectancy and other human capacity and economic indicators.

V. Post-conflict transitions

A. National ownership and capacity-building

36. National ownership of the transition process in post-conflict transition countries must be both a general principle and a priority objective guiding international assistance efforts. Without such a focus, the main goal in post-conflict

transition — consolidating a sustainable and just peace — is unlikely to be achieved. Without national ownership providing a vision of the sort of country for which the transition process is laying the groundwork, sustainable peace is unlikely. When transition processes are not rooted in their host societies, for example, they risk being derailed by lingering conflict and unmet expectations. Inadequate ownership also opens the door to parallel structures being developed outside the formal institutions called for by peace agreements, which may work at cross purposes with formal arrangements and contribute to tensions and instability.

37. As crucial as national ownership of transition processes may be, however, such ownership cannot and should not be assumed to exist or to spring into existence fully formed at the start of transition. Unlike post-disaster situations, the capacity of national actors to effectively and fully engage a transition process cannot be assumed after years of conflict. The trauma of conflict and the circumstances leading to it are likely to have eroded the capacities of national actors to guide and manage complex post-conflict transitions. De facto country-wide sovereignty can also not necessarily be assumed. Effective State control may not extend to all areas, or may be limited in those areas it does reach, and the legitimacy of transitional governmental bodies needs time to take root in post-conflict societies.

38. National ownership must be cultivated by all participants in the post-conflict transition process. In the short term, this will entail the creation of planning and coordination mechanisms that are led by and/or strongly engage national actors, involving them in both consultations and decision-making. In the mid- to longer-term, reinforcing national ownership will also require a concerted effort by international actors to avoid unnecessarily substituting for national actors, as might have been required during the height of the conflict. International actors must also make a concerted effort to develop national capacities. For example, international actors should support Government efforts to reassume the key functions of the State in a manner consistent with human rights norms and obligations, including basic administration, security, law and order, and the provision of social services.

39. As crucial as it is to uphold the principle and pursue the objective of full national ownership, experience demonstrates that the fragile period immediately following the conclusion of peace agreements necessitates a realistic expectation of national capacities to manage the myriad efforts required for the success of transition. Successful post-conflict transition also requires the rapid launch of assistance programmes that will help to quickly stabilize and improve the situation in a country, including ongoing relief efforts, rapid scaling-up of delivery of basic social services, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, return programmes for internally displaced persons and refugees, and livelihoods and small-scale infrastructure programmes to revitalize rural economies and generate jobs. The speed with which such programmes need to be launched if they are to be successful will sometimes limit the degree to which they can build on existing national structures, particularly in conflicts that have drastically eroded national capacities, or in areas where the extension of State authority is still limited. This places a premium on the need for capacity solutions, involving civil society, decentralized approaches and non-governmental actors, while building in commensurate capacity-development measures to accompany large-scale expansion of external assistance.

40. Post-conflict transitions typically lead to new areas being accessible, which usually harbour pockets of extremely vulnerable populations. Humanitarian agencies will have to respond extremely quickly to address critical needs, and will continue in such instances to substitute for national authorities, rather than develop national capacities. Early in post-conflict transitions, therefore, it will be critical for humanitarian agencies to maintain their own capacity to flexibly address such needs. Doing so will entail upholding the well-established humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality, without which humanitarian agencies are unable to operate effectively.

41. The exact balance of efforts to strengthen national ownership and other efforts critical to successful transition will depend on the particular transition. The specific nature of efforts to reinforce national ownership — be they planning and coordination mechanisms or capacity-development programmes — will also vary from one context to another. This extent of variability is illustrated by the responses to the post-conflict transitions in Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and Haiti.

42. In Sierra Leone, following the declaration of peace in January 2002, humanitarian and recovery assistance planning was integrated with national development plans and combined with building national capacity. Specifically, a National Commission of Rehabilitation, Resettlement and Reconstruction was created with technical and financial support from international donors. This Government body, later reorganized as the National Commission for Social Action, was the principal Government partner involved in the design and delivery of humanitarian response and the development of the national and district recovery strategies. Grants from the two Commissions supported community-based recovery and strengthened civil society, allowing relief activities to support long-term recovery from the outset.

43. The development of the National Recovery Strategy and the establishment of National and District Recovery Committees also helped to ensure national ownership and contributed to the development of national capacity. Despite its failings,[7] the National Recovery Strategy provided a framework that guided both local and international recovery interventions. The Committees, although hindered by minimal resources and severe capacity constraints, provided a vehicle for the extension of Government authority and functioned as a Government partner for community-based recovery interventions across all sectors at the local level and laid the foundations for district councils and Government decentralization.

44. In Afghanistan, internal governance structures were insufficient to take on full responsibility for post-crisis activities after the collapse of the Taliban regime in 2001. It was therefore a priority to reinvigorate the national capacity of Government ministries and other institutions as quickly as possible so that the decisions taken and their implementation were domestically driven. In part this was achieved by a "light footprint" approach to the design of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, which was intended to prevent large numbers of expatriate staff from overwhelming what was supposed to be an Afghan-owned reconstruction process. In addition, joint strategic planning among international and national actors in Afghanistan was critical to enabling the Government to function. This was achieved through the creation of the Afghan Assistance Coordination Authority and later the consultative groups, which facilitated substantive interaction among the Government, donors, international financial institutions, United Nations agencies

and non-governmental organizations in defining, financing and implementing priority programme areas and served as the primary mechanism for developing the national budget. The United Nations also seconded staff to several of the Afghan line ministries, including the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction and Development, to jump start critical Government programmes.

45. The transition in Haiti demonstrates the requirement to balance practical efforts to increase national ownership with the response to urgent emergency needs. Following the political crisis and the subsequent deployment of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), the country was struck by a series of hurricane-related floods late in 2004, requiring the immediate mobilization of the Government's and the United Nations in-country resources and capacities to respond to compound humanitarian needs. This crisis, combined with the fragility of Government institutions and ongoing security concerns, delayed the implementation of the Interim Cooperation Framework, which had been prepared by the Transitional Government in Haiti, in close cooperation with the international community, to identify priority transition areas[7] and link early transition planning with longer-term national strategies.

B. Coordination

46. As the prior examples demonstrate, effective coordination among international and national actors in post-conflict transitions is critical to ensuring ownership of the transition process within the Government and local communities. This requires inclusive processes that include line ministries, central banks, local government and community groups. Coordination structures and processes — from needs assessments to strategic planning to funding mechanisms — must be designed and implemented with, and in support of, national development plans and budgets. It also requires that the delivery of services supports, rather than duplicates, national efforts.

47. The coordination of transition efforts also requires that the various facets — political, peacekeeping, humanitarian, human rights, developmental — of the United Nations strategic and operational response at Headquarters and at the country level, must come together around a unified strategy and purpose. However, the developmental, humanitarian, human rights, peacekeeping and political parts of the United Nations and its partners do not always act in full harmony or with a shared understanding of context and events. Moreover, the United Nations sometimes struggles to strike the right balance between quick-impact projects and longer-term, institution-building processes. Effective and smooth transitions therefore require a single and consistent strategy that supports greater coherence between political and operational efforts based on common analysis and assessment of needs, identification of roles and priorities, clear and strong leadership, and coordination in support of national recovery. Ongoing discussions with regard to the Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Support Office, and those pertaining to the recommendations of the integrated missions study, are providing a platform to deliberate on these challenges.

48. United Nations partnerships with other international and national actors, including regional organizations, donors, international financial institutions, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and non-governmental

organizations, are also critical to the transition process and need to be further developed throughout all stages of the transition process. Regional entities such as the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States and the Southern African Development Community, can facilitate the regional stability that supports country-level transition. Non-governmental organizations — both national and international — are often involved in capacity development and the delivery of critical social services to local authorities and civil society before, during and after transition. Their knowledge, experience and networks on the ground can contribute significantly to the dynamics of transition.

49. Again, the responses in Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and Haiti illustrate how the United Nations has attempted to tackle these coordination challenges. The establishment of an integrated mission in Sierra Leone facilitated coherent planning between the United Nations country team and the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). Facilitated by the creation of the post of Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the United Nations country team and UNAMSIL developed coherent transition planning in support of the national recovery process. The country team then worked closely with the Mission and the national authorities to prepare the peacebuilding and recovery strategy in order to allow for the phase-out of relief actors and to help United Nations agencies shift their operations from emergency to reconstruction activities. The country team also developed a transition support team to provide coordination support within the team and to support the Government and local authorities to take the lead during transition.

50. At a broader level, the consultative group for Sierra Leone provided an excellent forum for bringing together the Government and its partners (donors, the United Nations, international financial institutions and non-governmental organizations), and the results based framework for 2003-04 (based on the National Recovery Strategy) provided a useful tool for monitoring and assessing progress, which guided overall recovery interventions. In 2004, the development partnership committee was established. It now serves as the principal coordination forum in which the Government and stakeholders can hold a dialogue on strategic, policy and funding issues.

51. In Afghanistan, the United Nations has focused on and worked to set up effective and coherent coordination structures with both national and international partners. The United Nations country team worked together with the World Bank on the formulation of the Government's interim poverty reduction strategy to ensure that the programme cycles of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, the interim poverty reduction strategy and the World Bank's country assistance strategy are being aligned and will have the same three-year lifespan. That collaboration is part of a broader trend towards more joint planning and programmes, for example, the effort to collectively support the Government in pulling together a $71.4 million drought appeal and the development of the reforestation project entitled "Green Afghanistan initiative", and underlines the need for clearly agreed planning processes that maximize the local expertise available within the United Nations country team.

52. The integration of United Nations agencies within the peacekeeping mission in Haiti has facilitated flexibility of response to both post-conflict and disaster elements of the transition process in that country. The structure of MINUSTAH was

designed to promote linkages between the peace and security and the development and humanitarian entities. The Mission is headed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, who is assisted by two deputies in charge of civilian affairs and humanitarian/development affairs. The Deputy Special Representative for development and humanitarian affairs is also responsible for the functions of the Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator. Moreover, the incorporation of the priorities of the Interim Cooperation Framework in the Mission's mandate, and the explicit recognition that key programmes, such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, are both security and development concerns, have enabled the United Nations in Haiti to respond to chronic humanitarian situations (the drought in the north) and exceptional emergencies (the hurricane-related floods at Gonaïves in September 2004), while providing transitional assistance. The combination of the functions of the Deputy Special Representative/Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator in MINUSTAH has also facilitated links with the military and police so that operations in difficult neighbourhoods have been coupled with planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, humanitarian assistance and restoration of basic services where possible.

C. Funding

53. The adequate and timely funding of transitions is essential to meet enduring humanitarian, recovery and peace consolidation priorities while simultaneously focusing on building national and local capacity. Taking into account existing and future domestic revenue streams is a critical component in determining the overall funding portfolio. In the absence of adequate domestic resources during the early stages of transition, flexible funding is needed to cover a wide range of urgent priorities, including recurrent costs associated with the payment of Government salaries so that basic Government services, may be restored. Since transition programmes depend on the coherent implementation of a variety of activities, the pace of progress also depends on funding all component priorities as identified and agreed upon during joint planning and assessment processes. In order to manage funds from multiple sources and integrate them into national planning and budget structures, stronger tracking, alignment, harmonization and simplification of working instruments must continue to be pursued. New pooled funding mechanisms, such as the multi-donor trust funds established for Iraq, Afghanistan and now the Sudan, are providing useful lessons for funding priorities identified through post-conflict needs assessment exercises, but it is also critical to ensure that flexible funding is made available in the critical months preceding the finalization of the needs assessment exercise following the signing of the peace agreement, when critical early transition activities must be put in place to facilitate stabilization efforts.

54. The availability of a mechanism to disburse external funding immediately in Afghanistan was critical to enabling the Government to function. Four days after the Afghan Interim Administration took office, as stipulated by the Bonn Agreement, the Afghan Interim Authority Fund, administered by the United Nations Development Programme was established. The Fund provided an immediate mechanism through which $72 million in donor funding could be channelled to salary payments for 240,000 civil servants, the repair of Government ministries and the purchase of basic office equipment and supplies. The Afghan Interim Authority

Fund was succeeded by the World Bank-administered Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, which aimed at channelling multilateral funding to support the national development plan, and by the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan, which provided a dedicated United Nations window to support security sector reform, including the payment of policemen's salaries and building the capacity of the police force.

55. To address continuing relief needs while advancing recovery and laying the foundations for sustainable development in Sierra Leone, the United Nations country team shifted the emphasis of the consolidated appeals process to the development of a transition appeal, which highlighted the need to address relief and recovery needs in parallel. At the same time, planning for transitional and longer-term development began at an early stage in 2002 with the formulation of a United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Sierra Leone (2004-07). The final transition appeal, in 2004, addressed residual relief needs and was designed to complement the first year of planned activities of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework.

56. In Haiti, however, the lack of a coordinated funding mechanism has hampered planning and response to urgent priorities, and has dissipated resources. The absence of a unique funding mechanism to support transition processes and programmes has made it difficult for the Government to plan ahead, track funds received and disbursed, or monitor the cost of programmes. Neither the Government nor MINUSTAH has had access to available, flexible funding that could be allocated in response to urgent priorities. Even the Government budget process is hampered by funding uncertainty. This has led to the postponement of the disarmament and rapid employment-generation programmes until a minimal amount of funding is confirmed. The receipt of funds is frequently the result of consultations among individual donors or partners and the Government, and decisions are sector- and even project-specific in many cases. This piecemeal approach, despite the existence of an agreed set of priorities contained in the Interim Cooperation Framework, means that considerable energy is devoted to project design and approval procedures, often for relatively small amounts of donor funding.

D. United Nations support to post-conflict recovery

57. A number of analytical and programming tools have been developed in the past year to facilitate the emergence of a national recovery and reconstruction plan that is based upon an internationally and nationally endorsed assessment of needs. The United Nations/World Bank post-conflict needs assessment methodology (or joint needs assessment) is a pivotal instrument underpinning such an exercise, which guides the complex and labour-intensive process carried out in partnership among multilateral, bilateral and regional actors, non-governmental organizations, civil society and representatives of national authorities. Such assessments are conducted in close collaboration with national Governments and stakeholders (including former parties to conflict, civil society, and non-governmental organizations) with a view to eliciting a national vision for the end state after the defined transition period, and shaping the recovery and reconstruction priorities and their financial implications. The United Nations/World Bank transitional results matrix is also being used to capture specific results, benchmarks, and costing implications associated with the post-conflict needs assessment, and serves as a monitoring and

accountability platform to support the dialogue between international and national actors, and between national authorities and the general public.

58. While the national plans and results matrices resulting from the needs assessment and results matrix exercises are technical documents representing the objective needs of the country, they also serve to underpin the political or peace process among national and international actors by providing a strong development platform on which to implement the national vision for peace and stability for the future. The assessments and the related national/donor coordination platforms for ongoing dialogue and monitoring have played an invaluable role in bringing together key partners around agreed priorities and requirements and provided a credible space in which to discuss progress, funding allocation, and performance of key partners against commitments.

59. Work is ongoing to establish clear linkages with other planning and appeal instruments. A variety of approaches has been adopted to help ensure that humanitarian needs continue to be met, despite the different planning time frames and actor profiles of the needs assessment and results matrix and the consolidated appeal process. There is also early experience with establishing forward linkages between needs assessment/results matrix planning and national poverty reduction strategies, as well as with United Nations Development Assistance Framework common country assessment planning, all aimed to harmonize and make the best use of already available analysis and priority-setting exercises. The United Nations and the World Bank are also looking at the possible adaptation of the needs assessment/results matrix approach for natural disaster scenarios.

60. Experience with different funding mechanisms and, most recently, a variety of multi-donor trust fund models is providing a number of lessons for further review with regard to timing, scope and operational modalities to best support United Nations response in transition scenarios. Ongoing discussions with regard to the possible establishment of a standing peacebuilding fund could also be instructive in this regard. However, the continuing disconnect between relief and reconstruction funding modalities of many donor countries continues to be a challenge to United Nations efforts to ensure predictable and accessible resources for post-conflict response.

61. While United Nations coordination support for humanitarian response and coordination for long-term development are well established and functioning, United Nations coordination mechanisms in the transition space still suffer from significant capacity gaps. As the experience of the Indian Ocean tsunami has just taught us, the post-disaster support to the Resident Coordinator for recovery planning must be scaled up at an early stage. As recent needs assessment exercises have demonstrated in post-conflict settings, humanitarian response is still in full swing when the window of opportunity for peace opens and the United Nations system, through the Resident Coordinator, is called upon to engage in broad-based transition and recovery planning. However, the institutional and financial capacity to meet the support needs of the Humanitarian Coordinator in humanitarian response far outpaces the institutional and financial capacity to support the Resident Coordinator. This imbalance must be addressed if we are to meet effectively the complex of challenges facing us in the transition period.

VI. Implications for future action

62. The transition from relief to development following both violent conflict and disasters associated with natural hazards is complex. In post-conflict societies, poverty pervades, Government and institutional capacity remains fragile, refugees and internally displaced persons need assistance to return home, corruption may persist, unemployment is high, and there is often a continued absence of adequate social services in many areas of the country. Recovery from a major disaster is as much about rebuilding — and where possible improving — lives as it is about restoring infrastructure. Managing recovery in any transition context requires investment of funds and effort in building national capacity, empowering communities and exploiting the synergies among development, humanitarian and other actors.

63. It is critical that, in the future, disaster recovery efforts continue to focus on promoting national and local ownership of and participation in the recovery phase and support national and local capacity across a range of disaster-management activities, including response systems, preparedness measures and risk mitigation and reduction. In support of those efforts, the United Nations should continue to improve recovery service delivery and accountability by strengthening leadership and coordination support structures in the field and by improving institutional accountability at Headquarters. This may include strengthening the resident coordinator system to take on a more directive role during the transition phase and strengthening the United Nations country teams to ensure that the necessary support is provided at the right time, in a predictable manner and in the most cost-effective way through the transition period.

64. Recognizing, on the basis of past experience, that the window of opportunity to raise disaster-related funds has been short-lived and has not led to predictable or adequate funding for the recovery phase, it is critical to ensure that response to needs identified in existing resource mobilization mechanisms, such as flash and consolidated appeals, includes support for early recovery needs and transition coordination, and support Resident Coordinators and United Nations country teams to issue transitional appeals for needs not captured in these emergency appeal instruments.

65. Recognizing also that humanitarian needs continue well into the post-conflict recovery and reconstruction period but that existing humanitarian appeals do not cover the full range of early transition activities required to ensure stabilization and re-establishment of basic State infrastructure before full needs assessments can be completed, it is essential to fully fund early recovery needs identified in the consolidated appeal process, and to support Resident Coordinators and United Nations country teams in issuing early transitional appeals, where appropriate, for needs not covered by the consolidated appeal process.

Notes:

A detailed evaluation of the national recovery process can be found at http://www.undpemergency.org/site/c.ghqmIdNVLtH/b.2004 archivedPrintable1.pdf.

Or areas identified are strengthening political governance and promoting national dialogue; strengthening economic governance and institutional development; promoting economic recovery and improving access to basic services.